



M. Edwards

L I F E

A N D A D V E N T U R E S

OF THE

ACCOMPLISHED FORGER AND SWINDLER,

COLONEL MONROE EDWARDS.

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NEW YORK, JUNE 1ST, 1848.

DEAR SIR:

FROM the relations which have heretofore existed between us, I take the liberty of subscribing the following pages to you. Your pursuits as a lawyer, and the professional taste consequent upon your extensive practice in the Criminal Courts, will, I have no doubt, dispose you to regard the written career of such a man as Colonel Monroe Edwards with interest and attention. It is proper for me to say, however, that I place this reliance rather on the intrinsic interest of the events, than on any merits in the style of their arrangement. Indeed, under the circumstances of the case, I have not been able to give myself that degree of satisfaction which is necessary to an author before he can expect to give satisfaction to others. The chapters were originally written for *The National Police Gazette* of this city, in intervals of other pressing duties, on allotted afternoons at the distance of a week apart, and according to an arrangement which made the task imperative, despite the inclinations of the hour. A work prepared in this way, though its powers as a narrative may be very strong, can have but few pretensions on the mere score of authorship; but I mention this only that you may know how to excuse those crudities of style, which might be considered grave defects in a purely literary composition. In offering it to you, I am satisfied, nevertheless, that whatever may be its exterior defects, it comprehends the career of one of the most extraordinary criminals who ever lived, and developes, to his account, a train of tortuous device, which, had it been devoted to another line of operation, would have ranked with the policy of those great intellects, which, in different ages of the world, have figured perversely upon the broader stage of political ambition.

I am, Sir,

Resp'y, &c., &c.

THE AUTHOR.

TO THOMAS WARNER, Esq.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

COL. MONROE EDWARDS.

CHAPTER I.

The young Forger's Birth and Parentage—Family Separations—Sojourn in New Orleans—Emigration to Texas.

It is not a usual custom with authors, and least of all with those who write biographies, to bluntly begin with the actual details of their task, without a sentimental sermon, a piece of soft description, or a flourish of rhetorical philosophy, as a prologue to the narrative. Now though we might follow the rule with a more than ordinary show of propriety, in relation to the grand but erring intellect of him, whom our pen must necessarily deal with as a hero, we prefer to leave his qualities and characteristics to that natural order of developement which grows from the degrees of life, and which, like every unartificial sequence, never fails to produce a clear and durable deduction, or definite result, to every class of mind. We shall, therefore, commence the history of the career of Colonel Monroe Edwards, with the first event of importance to him in this life; the event of his birth.

Colonel Monroe Edwards was a native of Kentucky, and was born in Danville, a town near the centre of the state, in the year 1808. His father was a man of considerable property, and of exceeding good repute, and these advantages being improved by an amiable and popular demeanor, he made himself sufficiently a favorite in the neighborhood, to secure several public stations of dignity and profit. He was a man, however, who cherished high notions of personal importance and of the dignity of wealth, and as may be supposed of one thus bent, he infused into the minds of his children those false notions of supercilious pride and consequent extravagance of expectation, which has been the perversion and the ruin of so many ardent and aspiring spirits. The error of this

course of education began to evince itself as early as 1822, when a succession of severe reverses in his crops and a fatal malady among his slaves, warned Mr. Edwards that he must make some disposal of his three sons, and put them in a way to do thereafter for themselves. He accordingly despatched the eldest to a mercantile house in New-York, and sent Monroe, who was the second son, to New-Orleans, retaining at home the younger boy and a girl of some seven years of age.

The name of the gentleman to whom Monroe was confided, was Morgan. He was a merchant of good business standing, and though his operations were not extensive, they were substantial and profitable. He was a very early acquaintance of Mr. Edwards, having been for years a resident of the same neighborhood, and to the confidence thus acquired he owed the absolute possession and direction of his favorite son, from the period of fourteen till twenty-one.

Mr. Edwards, soon after this division of his domestic circle, had occasion to find that the disposal of his children had been prudent. Misfortunes followed him in rapid succession, and encountering thus the severe crisis which during the interim between the years 1822 and 1825, so disastrously struck the west, he became thoroughly involved, or to use a plainer and more appropriate term for that condition—thoroughly ruined.

Though nearly broken in mind by this tremendous reverse of his condition, he still retained sufficient composure to take a patient survey of his affairs, with a view to make calculations for the future. Around him everything seemed suited only to despair. His accumulated embarrassments overlaid and stifled every hope, and the stringent and oppressive laws which then prevailed generally throughout the states for the collection of debts, added terror to depression. He was

too old to hope to commence life anew while bound and trammelled by these restrictions, and there seemed, therefore, nothing for him now but emigration to some land, where such energies as were still left him, might have leave to act unfettered.

It was about this time that the attention of the enterprising, the adventurous, the hopeful and the desperate, began to turn towards the new republic of Mexico, and particularly to that salubrious and alluring portion of it adjoining the borders of Arkansas and Louisiana, just then beginning to be known as Texas. This region, in addition to its fertility and vast agricultural resources, was peculiarly inviting to the free adventurer of the United States, as a political department. It was an Independent State in a new and promising republican confederation, and its constitution, which proclaimed the great principle of human liberty, that "the sovereignty of the state resides originally and essentially in the general mass of individuals who compose it;" was recognized and subscribed to by Federal Power of which it formed a part. There was, therefore, no sacrifice of principle or circumscription of political opinion necessary to the emigrant from the north, and under the confidence that their lives, liberty and property would be protected by constitutional guarantees equally sacred and secure with those of their own country, many of the citizens of the United States listened to the alluring proclamations which invited them to these supreme enjoyments, and transferred themselves to this fertile portion of the Mexican Republic.

Among the rest went Mr. Edwards and his family, with the wreck of the estate which they had left behind converted into sufficient means to establish them in their new home. This was in the year 1823, in the latter part of which he settled upon Galveston Island, purchasing about a league of land on the south side of the bay, near Red Fish bar, still recognised by some of the early residents of the place as Edwards' Point.

Young Edwards was of great service to Mr. Morgan. Naturally of excellent parts he showed a great aptitude for business, and he appeared to comprehend, with a facility that seemed like intuition, the most complicated mercantile transactions. He had but two faults; he was too handsome and too fond of pleasure. It was idle, however, to hope to entirely prevent a boy of his intelligence and vi-

vacuity, in such a city as New Orleans, from the pursuit of the latter, so Mr. Morgan, after lecturing him duly on the perils of late hours and a loose life, left him to follow his bent, under such restraints as he supposed the young man's strong common sense and his regard for his good opinion would impose. He was not altogether disappointed though he was entirely deceived. The young man was circumspect in his deportment and apparently punctual in his habits, but he made this seeming regularity the servant of illicit courses, and protected his vicious digressions from inspection, by the confidence which his circumspection inspired. A shed under his chamber window afforded him the means to reach the ground, and a rear gate gave him access to the street to meet companions with whom to pass the late hours of the night, while the family of his employer imagined that he was asleep.

The facilities thus afforded for him to dispose of the avails of a liberal salary were embraced to their fullest extent, and though we are not possessed of the details of his demoralization, we are sufficiently informed, through his own allusions to this portion of his life, to be satisfied that it was loose in the extreme, and that to the excesses of this early period he owed that thorough vitiation of his principles, which became the curse of his talents and the bane of his future prosperity.

Two or three years passed in this way, when Mr. Morgan meeting with some reverses in his business, began to listen to the alluring representations of the Texan land companies with a favorable ear; and being further impressed with the advantages and salubrity of the country, by the glowing descriptions that were contained in the letters which young Edwards received from his family, he decided to pack up his stock in trade and transfer it to the new region. He accordingly settled up his business affairs, and disposing of such articles as he did not require, and purchasing others to complete the assortment of a good retail country store, he set sail with the young Edwards and his own family for Galveston Bay, in the second year after the emigration of the father of our hero.

Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Morgan and Monroe, Mr. Edwards died, leaving behind him nothing but a good dwelling and a well improved farm, with the incumbrances of a widow and young daughter, who, from appearances at the time, were likely to become the special

charge of Monroe. Indeed, it turned out to be so.

Being not yet twenty years of age, Monroe concluded to remain still with Mr. Morgan, assisting him in the establishment of his business, and having an eye, through the shrewd suggestions of his mother, to an eventual interest in his establishment. There was one other motive that inclined him to this conclusion, and which, though unseen by other eyes, had doubtless more influence than all.—It was his growing attachment for Mr. Morgan's daughter, who, though still a mere child, had already won a strong hold on his feelings.

Mr. Morgan had selected for the location of his store and farm, or plantation, as it has since become by the introduction of slaves and the cultivation of slave products, a site on the left bank of San Jacinto bay, a branch of the bay of Galveston, which receives the waters of the Buffalo and San Jacinto rivers. The situation was most eligible, as well for the transaction of business as the operations of agriculture. It was the point at which the road from Houston debouched into the bay, and being at the head of the bay itself, was the *tete du pont* of all the inward emigration of the most fertile and populous portion of Texas. The banks of the bay were sufficiently high to prevent the danger of inundation during the spring tides, and it was sufficiently level at the point where Mr. Morgan had selected the site for his store, to admit of the landing of the goods and passengers with very slight improvement in the way of docking. At the distance of a short half mile up the bank, which inclined at that distance to a height of some two hundred feet above the level of the bay, he pitched his residence, commanding in the rear a downward slope, which, after it reached the point of its decline, sheeted outwards in a vast plain as level as the water in front, but still relieved from its monotony by little islands of foliage, scattered here and there as a counterpart to the numerous islands which broke the silver surface of the bay.

In due time the store was built, and the residence, which, without ostentation, might be called the "mansion," in a few months afterwards took possession of the summit of the hill. From its east door, which commanded the expanse of the lesser and the greater bay, could be seen the wearing ship, the slanting clipper, the dancing cockboat, the soaring gull and the white foam of the gulf in the far distance dashing its spray over Pelican

Island; the west commanded the whole sparkling line of the curving San Jacinto with its rushy margin and dense fringe of woods; while spreading from its eastern side, the plain rolled on until it extended to the memorable battle field which takes the river's name.

There still the mansion stands with its spotless sides and palings, surrounded with numerous outhouses and negro cottages, that mark the nucleus of an extended glebe. The grounds evince the highest state of cultivation, while the rare and precise order of its garden betray the refined care, which at some early period it must have received from a tasteful female hand.

Things, however, were not so far advanced at the time which claims our more immediate attention, for then every effort was confined to breaking ground, and the to rough work of establishing an interest. By dint of extraordinary efforts and unremitting attention Mr. Morgan at length secured that foothold in business which indicated his future prosperity to be secure, and Monroe, whose efforts and intelligence had contributed so largely to this state of things, had the satisfaction also to perceive that hope of an interest in the concern, which had pretty steadily possessed his mind for months, approach almost to a practical proximity.

While things were in this promising condition however, circumstances arose that struck the hope away and altered the whole basis of his prospects.

CHAPTER II.

Holcroft the Slaver—The Temptation—Departure from Texas—The Double Artifice—Bound for the Brazils.

Among the associates which young Edwards had made in New Orleans, previous to his emigration to Texas with Mr. Morgan, were a number of adventurers advanced far beyond himself in years, some of whom in addition to that hardness of the sentiments which is the usual result of mere worldly experience were perverted from all gravity or principle, by lives of license, disappointment, peril and misfortune. With men thus soured and demoralized, regard for the world and the world's opinions seldom rises much above contempt, and their social recklessness and vicious courses are commonly justified, among themselves, by the trite maxim that "all mankind are knaves, and that it is there-

fore, fair to plunder in advance, those who only require a chance to rob you."

It might be supposed that moral heresies so diametrically opposite to the generous inculcations of his youth, would have startled the mind of one so young as Edwards, but he had less heart to retain original impressions than imagination to receive new ones, and he therefore assimilated his notions with those of these philosophers, without any obstacle being offered by his bosom, beyond the momentary hesitations of curiosity at their novelty. He adopted the maxim that the world owed every good fellow a good living, and very soon came to think also, that it mattered very little how a good fellow got it, provided he could keep himself clear of the interference of the law.

One of these associates was a man of some thirty-five years of age, named Holcroft, a shrewd but desperate adventurer, who had passed several years of his life in the slave trade between the coast of Africa and the Brazils, and who, if the rumors which attached themselves to a portion of his career were true, had at times given his operations on the high seas a still bolder and more bloody scope. This man left New Orleans, a few months after our hero's emigration to Texas, on some secret and peculiar expedition, sending word of his departure to his youthful friend, but promising to return and pay a visit to Texas in the following year.

The year ran round, and another and another followed, without any tidings of the slaver, and Edwards at length made up his mind that he should never see his friend again. This was a matter of considerable regret to the young man, as Holcroft's friendly deportment had commanded his attachment and respect, and he had cherished moreover, with the utmost fervor, the captivating promise which the slaver once had given, that he would some day make him the companion of one of his romantic enterprises to the coast of Africa, or the South seas. This hope, however, together with all expectation of ever seeing his friend again, had fairly taken its departure at the time alluded to in the conclusion of our first chapter, when, to his complete surprise, the young man realised one half of it, by the sudden appearance of the missing person. He had gone down to the town of Galveston on some commission for Mr. Morgan, and while walking musingly along the street, turned to answer the summons of a hand that fell sudden-

ly upon his shoulder. He cast his eyes rapidly over the tall figure of the comer, but though he was baffled for a moment by a heavy scar which ran transversely across both the stranger's lips—the bronzed cheek, the jetty locks and the strong lineaments which met his eyes, identified the slaver.

The meeting was cordial; each seized the other warmly by the hand, and turning by common consent to the outskirts of the town, both sought the opportunity for a long and uninterrupted conversation on the events that had transpired since their last meeting. Edwards made a rapid detail of his condition and prospects, and Holcroft after giving a narrative of his recent adventures, wound up by asking the young man if he felt disposed to see a little of the world, provided he could have an easy time and make a round sum of money by it.

A little reflection enabled the young man to answer. He was now more than twenty years of age. In stature, in appearance, in intelligence, and in passions he was a man. His course of life was monotonous, and to his eager, restless disposition, his gradual progress, weary. There was nothing to bind one of his tastes and desires to that half populated semi-civilised country and a weary tide waiting upon a doubtful hope, but the lack of some better avenue to fortune. His mother and sister were still comfortably situated on their estate near Red Fish Bar, and the presence in Texas, of his two brothers, the eldest of whom (Ashmore) had been settled on the Brazos for more than two years and was already a prosperous and highly respectable planter, guaranteed their future comfort and protection. The slaver's question, therefore, received an affirmative reply, qualified only with the reservation by the young man, that he would go any where this side of —, if he saw a chance to make money by it. Holcroft upon this declaration grasped his hand, remarking, "if that was all that he required, the bargain between them might be considered as made, as there would be no difficulty in showing how that could be done."

The slaver then proceeded to develop the whole character of the proposed enterprise, relating as he did so, more fully than he had done before, the particulars of his recent expeditions, by way of explanation of the prospective one, which was to be of the same character. To be brief, he had been engaged in making voyages from the Brazils to the slave coast. Two

of these had been highly profitable, but the last had miscarried through the persevering pursuit of a British cruiser, which had obliged him and all his crew to abandon their vessel in their boats under cover of the night, just as they had arrived upon the South American coast on their return. To accomplish their escape they had been obliged to leave to the hands of their pursuers, their entire cargo of slaves, and indeed every thing on board, except the vessel's papers, which were prudently destroyed. This mishap made a serious drawback on the profits of the former speculations, and it was likewise additionally injurious to Holcroft, himself, as it made it necessary for him to remain secret for a time, and to give up all thoughts of returning to business until the cruiser which had overhauled him, had left the station. His employers, however, informed him that this desirable event would probably take place in a few months, as it was already time for the cruiser to be relieved; suggesting that after that circumstance occurred, he might with the aid of a discreet "*fly captain*," resume his employment in their service with the same impunity as before. Holcroft recognized the correctness of these views, and returned thanks for the offer which they embraced, but told the slave merchants that inasmuch as he should be obliged to lie up for some time, he believed he would enjoy the idle season by making a voyage to the United States, promising to return at the end of eight or nine months with a "*fly captain*" of his own selection.

"I thought of you when I said this," remarked Holcroft in conclusion, "and it is to offer you this berth that I have come here now."

It being necessary that Holcroft should explain to one so utterly uninitiated as Edwards in the dark mysteries of the slave traffic, what the precise character, functions and emoluments of a "*fly captain*" were, he described that equivocal personage to be a visionary officer, known only on the decks of the slave traders, whose business it was, in the ostensible character of captain, to procure for the vessel a set of American papers from the American Consul, for the coast of Africa and the United States, while the real captain was furnished with another set by the Brazilian naval office, to enable the vessel to sail and return under the Brazilian flag. The use of this double set of papers was obvious. If overhauled by a foreign cruiser the

"fly captain" would be found in command with the American papers, while the real captain would be numbered with the crew; but if boarded by a Brazilian man-of-war the Brazilian papers would be shown. With a foreign cruiser an American vessel bound to the "coast" for a cargo of palm oil, gold dust, ivory, &c., and from thence destined to the United States, was not likely to excite suspicion, while with the Brazilian service, the regular papers of their own government were always considered amply sufficient as an endorsement of the honest character of the trader; a conclusion the more easily arrived at by the officers in the service of the empire, from the fact that their Government was known to entertain a real disposition to encourage the advantageous traffic, which unpalatable treaties bound them to pretend to repress.

Having been made to understand the character of a "*fly captain*," having also been persuaded by Holcroft, that it was attended with but little risk, and having been likewise assured that a favorable voyage would make the berth worth from five to eight thousand dollars, Edwards resolved to accept the slaver's proposal, and undertake the enterprize. In accordance with this determination, he on the following day acquainted Mr. Morgan with his intention to leave Texas for New Orleans, stating as an excuse, that he had been offered a share in a trading speculation, that promised to be highly profitable.

Mr. Morgan endeavored to dissuade his clerk from this intention, significantly intimating at the same time, to give force to his objections, that he knew how he could do much better by staying with him a while longer. But the prospect came too late; the youth had dreamed all night of his new speculation, and it had become fixed upon his mind beyond defeat, even though Mr. Morgan's promise had embraced the full measure of his previous hopes. He stated his resolution to be fixed, and making a visit to his mother and to the plantation of his elder brother, he informed his relatives of his intentions, and bidding them adieu, sailed the next day with Holcroft for New Orleans.

Edwards had three or four hundred dollars at the time of his departure from Texas, and Holcroft was possessed of as many thousands. Being thus liberally provided, it was decided between them that they would not put themselves to the inconvenient haste of hurrying off in

a vessel that was to sail for Rio Janeiro on the very day succeeding their arrival, but that they would remain in the Crescent city for a fortnight, at the end of which time they could obtain passage for their destination in a splendid bark.

The interval thus obtained was to be improved by Edwards in procuring a stock of clothes and other necessities for his voyage, but the evidence that he did not confine his expenditures entirely to indispensable requirements, is seen in the fact that before a week had elapsed, he found himself without money, and only half supplied with what he wanted. He did not care to acquaint Holcroft with his embarrassments or to apply to him for a loan. Their intimacy was perfect, it was true, and though rendered absolutely flexible and unrestrained by communion in a dark purpose, there still was something about the severe intelligence and cold shrewdness of the slaver, which forbade the young man to request of him that favor—of all things dearest to the worldly heart—a pecuniary service. Still he felt that he must have money, for he had set his heart upon some finery and trinkets with which to make his really fine person still more captivating in the eyes of the Brazilian damsels, whose charms and good nature Holcroft had so vividly described to him. The problem of supply was tough. He resolved the matter over and over in his mind, but only seemed to get the more and more perplexed. At length through the midst of the chaos of conjecture there glided a faint, but subtle and definite idea. It seemed to penetrate through the confusion of his brain, like a ray of light, clear, cold and cutting; bidding the striving thoughts to stand aside until it challenged the entire attention of his mind. It was the first faint inception of the demon of his fate—forgery.

It had struck him among his other projects of relief, to write to a certain friend in Texas for a loan, on the pretext he required it for speculating purposes, which had exceeded his original calculations; but an instant's thought reminded him that he had not time for such a course. This he regarded as a sore misfortune, for he knew his friend would let him have the money. Then came the evil suggestion—might I not as well avail myself of the power to appropriate the necessary sum of my own accord, and account for it in a convenient season."

The thought seemed improper but not criminal, for it was merely a bold conquest of obstacles which that friend,

could he but know his wishes, would gladly set aside. The idea which had at first startled him was soon familiarised by this seductive sophistry, and some further reflection upon the extremity of his wants, convinced him that under all the circumstances, its adoption was justifiable. He had no doubt of his perfect ability to perform the forgery. He was unsurpassed as a penman, and frequent idle scribbles during his leisure hours at home, had convinced him that he could imitate any style of writing without an effort. He had letters in his possession of the signature he wished to use, and a few trials satisfied him that he could produce a *fac simile* that would defy detection. While thus experimenting he had not resolved upon the crime, but he seemed to be only idly enjoying an amusement with his pen that was incident to the strange thought.* The consciousness of power to defy detection never yet restrained a single evil scheme, and as Edwards saw signature after signature flow from his hand, the very fellows of the one he copied, the faint conception became converted into a resolve, and he drew a note for six hundred dollars upon one of the most responsible men in Texas.

On the following morning he went to Holcroft's room, and with an air of glee told him that the mail had brought him a windfall. He then showed him the note; describing it as the amount of a debt due him by a wealthy planter, which he had desired his brother to collect and forward to him, previous, if possible, to his departure from New Orleans. Holcroft, without the least suspicion of the fraud, congratulated his protégé upon his good fortune, whereupon Edwards handed him the paper and requested him to go, and get it cashed at a certain broker's office, where he said the responsibility of the drawer was well known.—Holcroft hesitated a moment, in surprise at the strange request, but on being told by Edwards that he wished to avoid an interview with the broker, who held a small claim against him that he would doubtless desire to offset against a por-

* In supposing the gradual operations of the forger's mind, the author has but assumed the common privilege of rendering a known *result* intelligible, by tracing degrees which might have intervened between it and its *cause*. It is a mere editorial license, or embellishment, which, if clumsily developed, does not impair the great fact to which it relates; but which, if ingeniously conceived, is a relief and refreshment, as well to the writer as the reader.

tion of the proceeds of the note, the slaver cheerfully undertook the commission, and in a few minutes returned to the hotel with the money, less the discount.

In this ingenious manner did the young forger evade the most hazardous and difficult portion of his nefarious scheme; evincing, by the double artifice which deceived and compromised one friend to the deliberate plunder of another, a degree of natural turpitude and an unscrupulous vileness of heart, that is scarcely to be found recorded in the annals of precocious villany.

The money, thus nefariously obtained was applied to the purposes for which it had been craved, and in a week after its receipt, and before return advices from Texas could reveal the fraud, the slaver and the forger were far away on the bosom of the Gulf, bound for the Brazils.

CHAPTER III.

*The Storm—The Wreck—The Rescue—
The Island of Madeira—Arrival at Rio
—The Slaver found—Signor Salerio—
Preparations for a Cruise—Captain
Jones—The Open Sea.*

The good barque which bore the forger and the slaver toward their destination, sailed swiftly for the first ten days upon the tranquil bosom of the sea, but on the morning of the next the beams of promise left them, and the threatening sky piled a portentous blackness in their path. It was late in the afternoon of the eleventh day when these symptoms began to combine into an evident danger, and at the hour of sundown, the distressed and groaning vessel was whirling to the gale; now leaping madly forward, now stricken staggering back; now suddenly projected and balanced upon sharp but treacherous acclivities, anon plunged downwards in vast and perilous hollows, and all through a darkness so profound, that had it not been for the shrieking of the tempest as it tore through the naked masts and tightened cordage, and the ponderous blows which the enraged sea smote upon the shuddering vessel's sides, the passengers, whose aching eyeballs sought in vain to strain a single object from the gloom, might have thought themselves plunging or poised amid the horrors of some dreadful nightmare that would at last let them to the earth and break the spell. But the writhing of their foothold and the plaintive whining of the wounded barque were too actual to their other senses to mislead them from the true

condition of their danger, and when the final trumpet of the storm summoned the vessel to her beam ends and commanded her inmates to abandon hope, there were those among them whose calculations were not taken by surprise, and whose pride was too great even in that desperate hour to allow them to whimper of a fear.

One of these was Holcroft, who grasping Edwards roughly by the arm, and plucking him from his knees, bade him be a man and stand by to get in the boat. Saying this he dragged his protégé after him across the deck, sustaining himself by holding on the weather bulwarks as he went along, until he came to where the men were busily engaged in freeing the jolly boat from her fastenings. Bidding the young man to hold on for a moment for himself, the slaver turned to bear a hand in the united effort, but before Edwards could make his grasp firm upon the rounded top-rail, a huge billow swooped him from the deck and launched him out upon the sea.

When the young man rose to the surface, he uttered a cry for help, but the sound was flitted like a puff of wind from his lips. He uttered another, but this time it was a wail of agony, and his heart sank almost hopelessly within him. Still with an instinct which is inseparable from life even when hope, nay, even when consciousness has departed, he struck out upon the waves a swimmer's stroke, to snatch a few moments yet from an impending eternity of death. The effort was rewarded, for as his arms were given their widest scope, his right hand met a broad and heavy plank which had been swept after him by the same billow that had launched him from the deck. This lucky rescue from immediate destruction seemed absolutely providential, for the vessel had not yet broken up or lost a spar, and this perhaps was the only buoyant thing afloat for hundreds of miles in her vicinity.—So thanking God involuntarily for the gift, the forger clambered upon the timber, and took a moment's breath for the efforts which he had just outlaid.

He looked around for some traces of the vessel, but still nothing pressed upon his vision but that dense and aching darkness which had so wounded it before; no sound made friendship with his ear save "the rapture of the strife" that was going on between the frantic elements. The only hope left for him was in the approach of light, and noticing after the lapse of a few minutes that the

wind was beginning to fall off, he commenced to take the measure of the tedious interval, by counting the minutes till the morning.

When the dawn swept the darkness from the surface of the billows, the struggle of the elements was done, and though the waves still rolled in ponderous tranquility, the spent and humbled breeze had scarcely sufficient strength to fan the weary forger's cheek. His aching eyes had been striving through the shadows from the earliest peep of dawn, and when at last they grasped the entire horizon, and met nothing but the wild waste of tumbling waters, the dreary consciousness took possession of his mind, that there, in that vast and terrible solitude, he must close his life. He was too young to quite abandon hope, but as near as depression could approach despair, his spirits fell. He passed that day upon the plank; he kept his vigils on it through the night, and the next day still saw it bearing him upon the surface of the bright and motionless sea, while the torrid sun blistered his soft cheek, and fevered him with thirst. It was at meridian on this day, when his sufferings seemed about to triumph over his power of endurance, that turning his eyes languidly to the north, he detected a spot upon the horizon that promised to turn out a sail. He looked again with a sharpened vision, and his idea was assured. It was a sail, and perhaps, fond hope! the bark searching after him. There was a doubt, however, that fell like a chill upon either these hopes, and that doubt was, how it could heave in sight and bear towards him without a breath of wind; but right upon this fear fell the reflection that perhaps she was bringing the wind with her. This latter calculation was correct; the speck grew larger and larger, and by the time the breeze came puffing on his face, he saw the outline of a splendid ship with all her canvass swelling to the gale. Roused with the liveliest agitation lest she should pass without seeing him, he stripped the sleeve of his shirt from his arm, and holding it in the air, kept waving it as a signal. Fortunately, the ship came right down towards him, and at some distance off he was espied by two of the sailors who were spinning yarns in the shade of the foresail on the bowsprit.

He was picked up, but having fainted immediately upon being brought on deck, he was put to bed without being importuned with questions. His situation, as may be supposed, created the

utmost solicitude on board in his behalf, but by careful treatment of the fever which supervened his first attack, he soon recovered sufficiently to be able to give an account of his disaster. With a duplicity inseparable from his character on any and on all occasions, he polished the story where he thought he could add to its effect, and took especial care to clench the respect which he found his manners and his misfortunes had already bespoken for him, by a representation that he was of one of the wealthiest families of Louisiana, and possessed, individually, of a very liberal fortune. This latter pretension evinced something more than conceit, and deserves being credited to that knowledge of human nature which teaches that men are more prized for their possessions than for their misfortunes, and that no extremity of pity can raise poverty into respect.

The result justified this philosophy. The greatest deference was paid to him on board, and he received assurances from the captain, who was an Englishman bound to Madeira, and from thence to London, that whatever funds might be immediately necessary for his use on arrival at the first named port, he would be most happy to advance.

In two weeks from this time the vessel arrived at Madeira. Our hero called on the American consul, and telling his story, obtained a small loan, and at the end of three weeks, when his friend the London captain, was about to start, he got from him the sum of a hundred guineas more.

Having resolved to pursue his journey to Rio Janerio in the hope that he would find Holcroft there, our hero remained in Madeira for six weeks after the departure of the English ship, awaiting a vessel to convey him to Brazil. At the end of that time there arrived a Dutchman bound to the Pacific, who intended to stop to water and provision at Rio. With him the young adventurer took passage, and in five months from the time he had sailed from New-Orleans, he fell in sight of the Sugar Loaf hill and the fort of St. Cruz, which marks the two sides of the port of his original destination.

Edwards set at once to work in searching out his friend, but after two days of unremitting effort, he came to the conclusion that the shipwreck had proved fatal to all on board the barque except himself. He therefore relinquished for the time all further active measures of inquiry, and with a flexible philosophy

natural to a predominating selfishness, turned to the enjoyment of the gaities and pleasures that tempted him on all sides, as if he had not suffered any disappointment, or the slightest wound of friendship.

One afternoon after the lapse of about a week, he took a ride with the master of a vessel, whose acquaintance he had made the day before, to the royal villa of Christovao, a favorite and fashionable resort in the environs of the city. His surprise may be judged, when on entering a billiard room at that place, the first ob-

ject that met his eyes was his friend Holcroft, leaning upon the table and about to make a strike. The meeting was ardent of course, and of course resulted in immediate and repeated drinkings. Holcroft leaned against the bar of the café or posada, with a glass in his hand, and gave a relation of what had happened since his strange separation from the forger on the sea; to which Edwards, after listening with due attention, replied with his own narrative.

Holcroft stated, that upon reaching his arm out when the jolly boat was fairly



THE FORGER AT SEA.

unslung to catch his friend, and finding him gone, he had nothing left to do but put his double grasp upon the boat and look out to save himself. When she was launched, he was the first to secure a seat inside, and the first to help to slide her off when he considered her freight complete. There were four persons left on board, one of whom was the cook, and a seaman who was sick in his berth, and these he judged had gone down with the barque. For himself and the boat's crew, they knocked about the open sea without compass, food or water, and without any implements of propulsion save a sail made from their garments, and squared to the wind by the aid of a board

torn from the scanty flooring of the boat. Three days were passed in this way, when, mad with thirst, they began to glare fiercely upon each other with thoughts of blood. Being, however, fortunately in the very track of trade, they were picked up at the close of the third afternoon by a brig, which in a short run landed them at Barbadoes. From this time Holcroft had managed very well, for the trusty belt he always wore upon his person had saved for him a liberal portion of his treasure, and by its aid he was soon enabled to find his way to the capital of the Brazils.

When this story was finished, another drink was had around, and the trio, all

inspired by the fortunate conjunction, made a revel that lasted throughout the night.

On the following day, when the two adventurers were alone, Holcroft extended his narrative to what had transpired since his arrival at Rio, and his then present condition of affairs. He had only arrived three weeks before Edwards, but had the chagrin to find that in the week previous, a splendid brig which was to have been reserved for him, had, in consequence of his non-appearance, been confided to another; and moreover, that the partner in the firm of his employers who had always most favored him, was buried on the very day he entered port.

"Thus," said he, concluding his story, "we perceive our prospects turned completely upside down, and I find *myself* three thousand dollars worse off than when I left Orleans!"

"It's a pretty hard state of things," said Edwards, shaking his head despondently.

"Not so bad as it looks for all that," replied Holcroft, starting up, "for I'm the best 'coast-skipper' in the Brazils, and *you* have impudence enough to make yourself the best 'fly captain.' We can't be long without an offer. The state of the markets throughout the world show colonial produce to be unusually high, and that regulates the demand for slaves. The prices will stimulate the planters to enlarge their cultivations extensively.—They cannot do this without an increase of slaves, and I should not be surprised if the next year saw seventy thousand wool heads taken from the coast. We can't be long without an offer, and the first good one that comes along, I mean to take. But, come, let's walk out and shake off the fleas."

The two adventurers turned in the direction of the Imperial palace, which being situated on the bay near the principal landing place, was the common resort of business men as well as idlers. As they turned upon the quay, Holcroft was accosted by a small sized withered little fellow about fifty years of age, with a keen grey eye, who drew him aside and held him in earnest conversation for a few minutes. Holcroft, at the first pause, beckoned Edwards to come up, and on his doing so, introduced him to the little man as *Captain Jones*, naming the owner of the keen grey eyes in return, as *Signor Saleria*. After the compliments which are usual upon an introduction, had been exchanged, the trio adjourned to an adjoining café, and there

the conversation between Holcroft and Saleria was resumed. Edwards being allowed to listen, soon found that the little man was a slave-broker, and discovered also that he was making his comrade a proposal to "take a freight to the coast and bring a return freight back," for such were the cautious terms which the experienced and wary agent used even in that presence, to indicate his dangerous proposition. The main point in dispute was whether Holcroft should take a percentage in the profits of the expedition, or receive a round sum, hit or miss, provided he returned in safety. The next was the fixing of that sum. A half hour's chaffer brought the pair to a tolerable understanding, and the slave agent took his leave.

"He offers me twenty thousand dollars for the voyage," said Holcroft to Edwards, as they turned into the street. "Twenty thousand dollars, and I to furnish my own crew and my own 'fly captain,' which will allow me to give you five thousand dollars, if I take it. I've been paid more, but I don't know but this will do pretty well for men who are out of business.—The only strong objection I see in the matter is, that he proposes to furnish me with a brig which has just been condemned as unseaworthy."

"I'll not trust my life in any such craft," said Edwards, determinately; "I've had enough of shipwrecks for a while."

"Saleria tells me, however," continued Holcroft, "that her injuries have been exaggerated, and that her condemnation was produced by collusion between him and the inspectors, in order that he might get her as a bargain. Moreover, she is clipper built, and can sail, by his account, like a witch."

"Has he bought her yet?" inquired the fly captain.

"No, he awaits our decision, but he says that he can get her for twenty-five hundred dollars, and that a hundred and fifty more will make her as staunch as when she left the stocks."

"*Perhaps*," replied Edwards ironically, "but we had better see for ourselves than take his word for it. Signor Saleria may be a very fine man, but if he would collude against the owners of this vessel, he might strain a point or two against us."

The adventurers walked to the ship yards on the other side of the bay, when having satisfied themselves by careful observation that the representations of Saleria were correct, Holcroft went to the slave agent's office, and closed the agreement between them.

The brig was, accordingly, hauled up on the ways, and, in a few days afterwards, was returned to her native element in beautiful sailing order—sufficiently staunch to make the soft run among the “trades,” and too good, by half, according to Holcroft, to be burnt up, as was to be her destiny, in the first cove where she might return and land her slaves.*

While the brig was in course of repair, Edwards, under the direction of Holcroft, obtained a set of papers signed by the American consul, for the brig “Clara,” Captain Jones, bound to the “Coast,” for a cargo of palm oil, cam wood, ivory, &c., and from thence destined to the good city of Boston. Holcroft, on the other hand, had procured a set of papers for the brig, “Teresa,” Captain Holcroft, bound for the coast and back; under which he was to sail out, and to return, if necessary, again into the port of Rio.

Edwards had apprehended some difficulty with the American consul. He feared that his youth would excite suspicion and induce questions that by exposing his ignorance of nautical affairs, would betray and defeat his object.—But he found the consul remarkably indifferent to everything but the mere routine of business, and indeed, experienced at his hands, as he thought, a degree of personal neglect, which inclined him to give considerable credit to the representations of Holcroft and Saleria, that he found his office too profitable, to discourage free trade by offering any annoyances to applicants.

Being at length quite prepared for their enterprise, and having, as their last care, deposited the papers in two small, curiously made, air tight leaden boxes, for the facility of towing one set overboard during a search and the examination of the other, the American brig Clara, Captain Jones, *alias* the Brazilian brig Teresa, Captain Holcroft, weighed anchor and stood out, to run the chances of the sea, and to defy the vigilance of the armed cruisers of the league.

* This is a common policy among the slave traders. The destruction of the vessel, especially if she has been chased, prevents identification of the craft, and destroys all evidence against the parties. The slaves cannot bear witness, and as soon as they touch Brazilian soil they are beyond the danger of recapture. “Dead men tell no tales,” say the pirates—“burnt ships and papers bear no witness against their masters,” say the slave traders.

CHAPTER IV.

The Cruise—English Philanthropy—The British Cruiser—The Native Brokers at Red Junk—The Return Voyage—The Tragedy of the young African—The Landing of the Slaves—The Burning of the Brig.

Holcroft was correct in his calculations of business: the slave trade was perhaps never so extensively prosecuted as in the year 1832, during which period, it was estimated by reliable authorities, that over two hundred thousand captives were taken from the coast of Africa. There were two causes for this. One of them has already been furnished by our slave captain in the then extraordinary demand for colonial produce; the other was the effects of the numerous captures made in the previous years, by the vigilant English cruisers that swarmed the middle passage. To render this result intelligible, it may be necessary to explain, that slave brokers, or agents, of Signor Saleria's class, contract to furnish the planter with a certain number of slaves at a certain price. If, therefore, the cargo which is to supply the contract, is captured or thrown overboard during a chase, the broker must redeem his misadventure by importing another lot. And if this fails too, he tries again, for his contract still stimulates the effort, and he must go on, until, by hook or by crook, the adequate number is obtained.

The direct result, therefore, as has been repeatedly demonstrated by able writers, of English vigilance and English philanthropy when brought to bear for the suppression of the slave trade, is to extend the traffic they endeavor to repress in the exact ratio of their efforts and apparent success; and to add to its horrors also, by an immeasurable increase. The slave merchant must have his complement for his contracts, miscarry as often as he may; and the slave captain must stow the negroes closer within decks to make a good run pay for the bad ones, and he must oftener throw the wretched captives overboard, to escape the increasing vigilance of the philanthropic British cruiser. Thus it is, that a colonial demand for fifty thousand slaves may lead to the capture or the death of a quarter of a million human beings, and thus it is, also, that one voyage out of four will pay a handsome profit to the Brazilian slave dealer.

The English cruisers, however, did not see business grow upon their hands without a certain degree of satisfaction, for

though its increase might afflict their sense of humanity, it offered a compensation for the philanthropic anguish, in the sum of twenty-five dollars "head money" for every negro captured and transferred to the servitude of an apprenticeship in the English West India colonies.

Your Englishman is a tolerable utilitarian, and adapts himself to the best side of a bad business with as much willingness, if not with the same tact, as a genuine Yankee. Finding that their enterprise and endeavors did not inure to the cause of humanity, the English cruisers felt justifiable in regulating their policy to suit their personal advantage.

Instead, therefore, of directing their main efforts to prevent the landing of the slaver on the coast, and the obtaining on his part of a load of slaves, they chose rather to leave him unmolested until gorged with captives, that they might secure a richer prize, and turn the labor to the account of the humane British sugar and coffee planters. This course not only seemed justifiable, but bore the air of patriotism. It rewarded them, while it enriched their Government, and the act of snatching the slaves from the hands of the primal oppressor, wore an appearance of dashing generosity which far outshone the mere preventive seizure of an empty vessel.

Whether the Government itself cherished this aim under the livery of an ostentatious philanthropy, cannot be positively fixed, but that it winked at the perversion, is pretty evident from the notorious persistence in the system by its agents.

This was the state of things, and these were the risks and chances which Captain Holcroft and Fly Captain Edwards had to encounter in their slave expedition in the year of our Lord 1832.

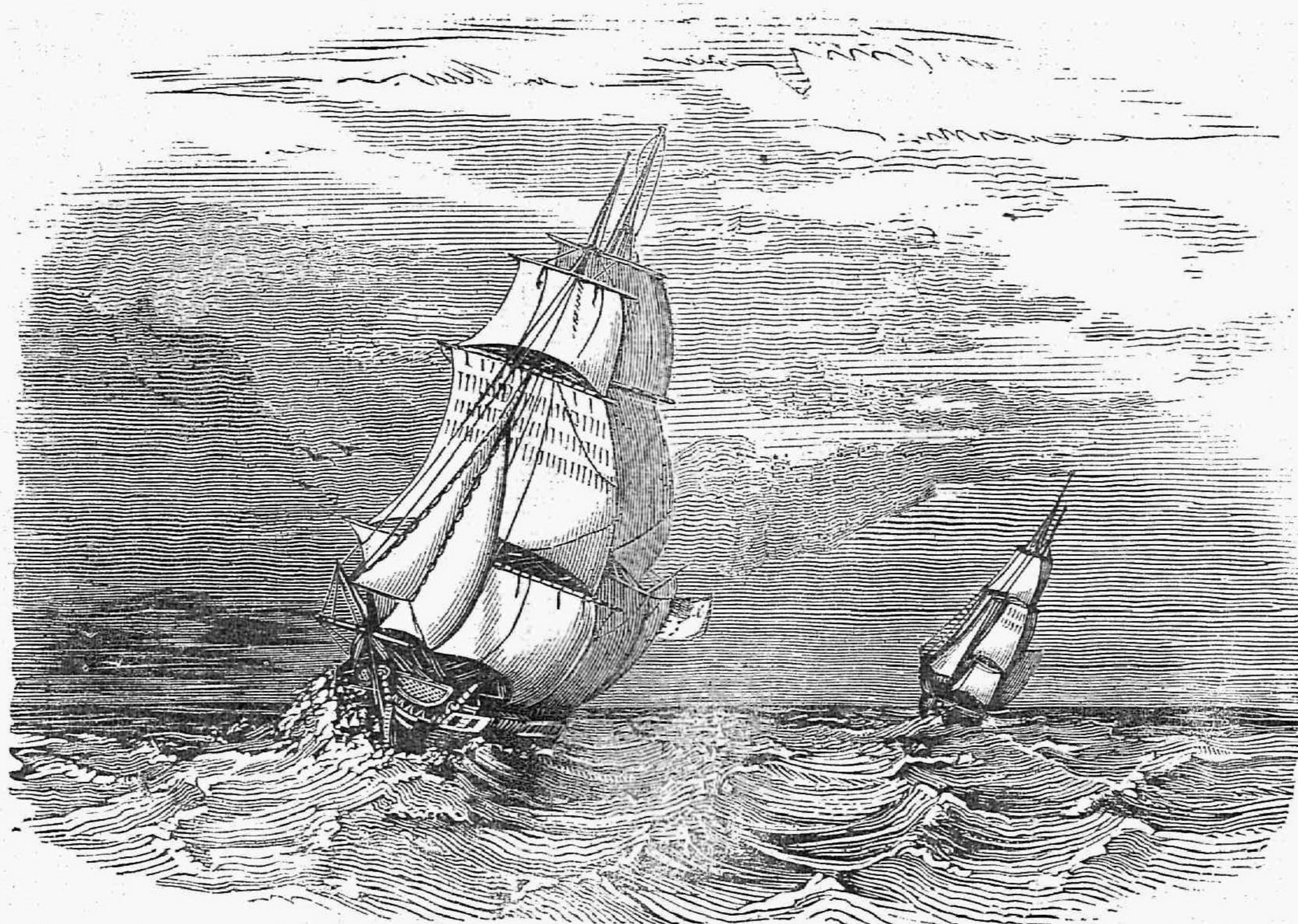
The *Clara*, *alias* the *Teresa*, went gambling on her course from the moment she lost sight of the coast of Brazil, till within a day or two's sail from Cape Palmas, when the look out aloft started activity into the lazy crew by the cry of "a sail on the weather bow."

From the most absolute languor and indifference every thing now was bustle and interest on board the *Clara*, and running to the cabin, Holcroft soon emerged with his glass and levelled it towards the little speck, which as yet did not more than twinkle on the edge of the flaming horizon. Finding he could not make her out from the deck, he went aloft, where, after a few minutes stay in

the cross-trees he satisfied himself. Turning, he came hastily down and proclaimed her to be a cruiser. This was a signal to the mate and those of the crew who had been on slave expeditions before, to put the vessel in a proper trim, and also a notification to Edwards that he must now, for the first time, prepare to assume the authority and fulfil the functions of a fly captain. He descended with Holcroft to the cabin, and while the latter was eagerly engaged in running through the desks and berths to see that no stray manuscript of any sort was left about, he arrayed himself in a rig more nautical than was usually adopted by his somewhat fantastic tastes. He did not altogether misbecome the character he was about so boldly to assume. His frame had set itself into a manly measure, and his whiskers, which remained the very pride of his heart even down to the period of the last misfortune of his life, already gave an umbrageous promise of their future magnificent dimensions.—He was, moreover, not altogether unqualified in other respects to act the skipper, for by daily devotion of his ingenious mind under Holcroft's directions, he had acquired the main principles of navigation, and could take the sun, keep a log, and chat about the vicissitudes of weather, as pat as if he had followed the sea for years.

By the time Holcroft had consigned every piece of useless manuscript to the flame of a lamp lit for the purpose, Edwards had arranged his toilet to his satisfaction. The leaden boxes containing the two sets of papers were then drawn out from their seclusion, and those for the "*Brig Clara, Captain Jones*," were taken out and deposited in a desk that sat openly upon the cabin table. The other box was taken to the after cabin windows, and being fastened to a cord that was attached at its other end to a staple in the stern of the vessel, below the water's mark, was tossed overboard to be out of harm's way, during the expected visit.

Having taken these precautions in this department of the vessel, Holcroft and Edwards went on deck, and the former devoted himself to inspecting with his own eyes, whether his directions had been followed in the concealment of the manacles intended for the slaves, the staves for extra casks and tanks of water, &c. Finding everything as he desired, he took his place by his fly captain's side, and as he watched the coming vessel extend itself upon the focus of



THE PARTING OF THE CRUISER AND THE SLAVER.

his glass, he kept repeating the instructions which he had so often before before impressed upon his youthful comrade and accomplice.

Holcroft lay directly on his course for some minutes as if he did not heed the appearance of the stranger, but noticing the signal flew that he would speak, and feeling assured that all his own conduct had been watched, he ordered the flag to be run out in answer to the invitation. This was his last order for the time, and retiring to the fore-castle among the men, whose outer garb he now wore, he resigned the further direction of affairs to Edwards.

In an hour from the time when the strange vessel had first been seen by those on board the Clara, she rounded to and threw herself into stays within hailing distance of the brig. Edwards, with trumpet in his hand, answered the summons of the cruiser, for so the stranger proved to be, and to his return hail of "Where are you from?" received the reply, "His Majesty's cutter, 'Growler,' on a cruise!"

The cutter then lowered a boat and boarded the Clara, affording Mr. Edwards *alias* Captain Jones, the somewhat novel pleasure of extending civilities to a British officer of rank. The lieutenant in command, rather pleased with the politeness and prepossessing manners of Captain Jones, proceeded with him to the cabin, and after a very cursory examination of the papers, and a few questions as to what news he brought with him from Rio, returned again to the deck. The hatches were then opened, and after a peep or two, and an occasional side glance at the crew, (five of whom were concealed) he bade the young Yankee skipper and his whiskers good morning, and pulled back to the cutter. The yards of the two vessels were then squared, and leaning to the breeze they both thrust their noses steadily into the buzzing water, as if conscious of having been trifling away their time.

"You managed to get off from that fellow pretty easy, Captain Jones," said Holcroft to Edwards, with a smile, as the cruiser bore away.

"Yes, rather easier than if he had held us on a chase; notwithstanding all the smartness of the Clara;" replied Edwards, gazing after the departing cutter.

"I think so too," replied Holcroft, "if 'rig and rake' are any thing. But it strikes me Captain Jones, that your friend slighted the examination a little,

and it strikes me also, that after we make the Cape, we had better run up the coast some distance to get out of his way. That lieutenant was a shrewd looking fellow, and my word for it he expects to catch us when we're too heavy to run."

"Well, if you think you know so much about the matter, perhaps you had better take the command yourself;" returned Edwards with a smile, keeping up the satire.

"Very good, just for the experiment I will," replied Holcroft; and then jocosely punching the fly captain in the side, by way of expressing his satisfaction at his management, he beckoned him down stairs to commemorate their escape in a glass of wine.

On the morning of the following day the Clara made Cape Palmas, when, half turning on her course, until she laid northwest, she stretched along the coast for some three hundred miles to Red Junk River, at that time a notorious slave station.

The Brig ran within the mouth of the river, and before she had swung to her anchor, was surrounded by a number of boats containing natives of the coast, called Kroomen, or Fishmen, who act as agents between the interior kings and the slave traders. Boarding the vessel on pretence of furnishing her with fruits and fresh provisions, these dusky brokers sought to anticipate each other in obtaining orders for slaves, and to give them their due, not even Signor Saleria, or any civilized passenger agent, could have exceeded them in tact, or in pertinacity of application. Indicating to two or three of the most promising of these dark forestallers that he would see them when he came on shore, Holcroft drove the whole swarm into the water, and put the vessel under the strict guard that it was necessary to maintain during their stay upon the coast.

But five days were necessary to obtain the full complement of captives capable of being stowed in the brig. This was the sum of one hundred and ninety eight males and females, most of whom were young and robust, and of mature size. Their average cost had been about twenty-five dollars, paid in the shape of muskets, powder, rum, cutlasses, bar-iron, tobacco, &c. Their average value at their port of destination would be about six hundred dollars apiece—leaving a clean profit on the run, of something like one hundred thousand dollars. A pretty

handsome cruise for the *Clara*, *alias* the *Teresa*, if it could only be finished as smoothly as it had begun.

On the morning of the sixth day, the slaver spread his canvass and drew out of the river. Everything was in prime order. The hatches were all ready to put down at a moment's notice; the carronades, of which six had been hoisted from the hold, were drawn beside as many fresh pierced but well disguised ports, while muskets and cutlasses lay hard at hand in readiness for strife. The sailing tacks were not less cared for than the fighting ones. The masts had been slushed, the rigging thrummed and stayed wherever it had given signs of weakness, and the decks caulked. But fortunately for the inhuman speculators, though unluckily for their hapless cargo, the slavers were not called upon for any special exercise of speed or strife, and they neared the Brazilian coast after a voyage of short four weeks, with no other incident than eleven deaths; one of which was a voluntary suicide by a splendid looking fellow who was said to be the son of a renowned chief. He jumped suddenly overboard the first time he was brought on deck for air, and with folded arms sunk into the bosom of the merciful deep, never rise to the surface more.

Edwards used to speak of this tragedy only as a strange and peculiar incident; seemingly impressed rather with the remarkable muscular beauty and manly sadness of the savage, than with any throe of pity for his fate.

The *Clara* made the coast of Brazil in latitude $22^{\circ} 30'$, in the middle of an afternoon in August, when turning her course slightly northward she laid for a small and secure bay, situated some twelve or fourteen miles south of the harbor of Rio Janerio. As soon as the land had loomed up from the ocean, and a few observations of the outline of the coast enabled them to define their locality with certainty, all hands turned to, to make preparations for a hurried landing and the destruction of the brig. The boats were prepared; the slaves were brought up in parties and chained in gangs convenient for debarkation; the leaden boxes with their papers were consigned to the deep for good, and combustibles in the shape of tarred cloth and turpentine were spread and sprinkled profusely about the vessel, to ensure a speedy conflagration. All things being thus ready, the slavers had only to watch the gradual redemption of the land out of the waste of distance, and

to sweep the horizon to assure themselves of their security against intrusion. Everything, however, seemed to chime with their hopes, and before the crimson had left the glassy surface of the sea, they had cast a light anchor in the cove, and were busy in transporting their captive cargo to the shore.

As they expected, Salaria's agents were on the look out for them, and they received the negroes from their hands. The debarkment being made, the boats were taken back to the brig and hoisted on board to perish with her, and the two seamen who were charged with the task of lighting her funeral pyre, having touched the train, pushed off in a little skiff that was native to the shore.

As the last gang of captives disappeared over the bluffs that bound the beach, the lurid flames from the slave vessel streamed upwards in the sky, and in a few minutes all that remained of her guilty frame lay motionless upon the black surface of the cove, a charred and cindered crust. Thus perished all evidence of one of the direst crimes that ever weighed against the human soul.

The slavers, however, received their accursed gold. On the other hand, one hundred and eighty-seven wretched beings found themselves waifs in a strange and cruel land; the blazing vessel which had torn them from their homes lay a beacon of despair, and the black ocean with its blank expanse beyond, bade them cherish no fonder hope of ultimate deliverance, but that to be found in death.—Worse than all, deserted by their own false gods, and mistrusting the barbarous Christian's heaven, they felt stripped in their desolation and utter misery, of even the solace of a hope beyond the grave.

CHAPTER V.

Departure from Rio—Vera Cruz—Mexico—The Signora—Return to Texas—The Plantation on the San Bernard—The Counterfeiter—Grand Schemes.

After possessing themselves of the price of their voyage, Holcroft and Edwards did not choose to remain in Rio Janeiro, or even to show themselves in public during their stay, to attract the remarks of those who might recognise them as officers of the little brig whose arrival had not made its appearance in the marine registers. They therefore secured a passage in a vessel bound to Vera Cruz, and by the assistance of Sa-

leria, in the way of passports, left Rio the tenth day after their arrival on the coast.

In due time the adventurers came in sight of the famous Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, recently become so familiar to American eyes. They however made but a brief stay in the city of the True Cross, for the eager imagination of Edwards could not rest until he had beheld the mysteries and gorgeous wonders of the great city of the Montezumas. The pair therefore set out together for the capital of Mexico, and arriving there, located themselves in a superb suit of apartments near the National Palace.

The stay of the adventurers at the capital lasted through a period of three or four months; being prolonged by an attachment which had been contracted by Edwards for a Spanish lady of considerable beauty, whose husband was a distinguished officer in the department of State. Though he gave himself up to this infatuation for the greater portion of his residence, he did not become entirely lost to that sense of speculation and profit which was so prominent an element in his selfish composition. He ascertained that the husband of his inamorata could afford him facilities, by his connection with the state, to purchase for a small sum of ready money, extensive empresario land grants in the department of Texas, the value of which would more than sextuple his means. Directing his attention assiduously to this speculation, he managed to acquire the favorable opinion and confidence of the Mexican functionary, and in a short time accomplished his entire object, possessing himself of titles to tracts which he estimated at the value of thirty-five to forty thousand dollars. Burning now with the superior passion of gain, aroused within him by this last stroke of fortune, his amorous flame began to wane, and he made preparations to return to Texas. A deal of tender anguish on the lady's part resulted from this resolution, but the Signora, after a due quantity of tears and vehement ejaculations, relinquished the young adventurer's soft cheek and handsome whiskers, and resigned herself to the natural separation, in the fond reliance of his promise to return to her again.

It was in the fall of 1833 when Edwards returned to Texas. He sailed thither as before from New-Orleans, but went back alone, as Holcroft desired to remain for a time in Louisiana.

Having reported himself to his family and received their congratulations on his

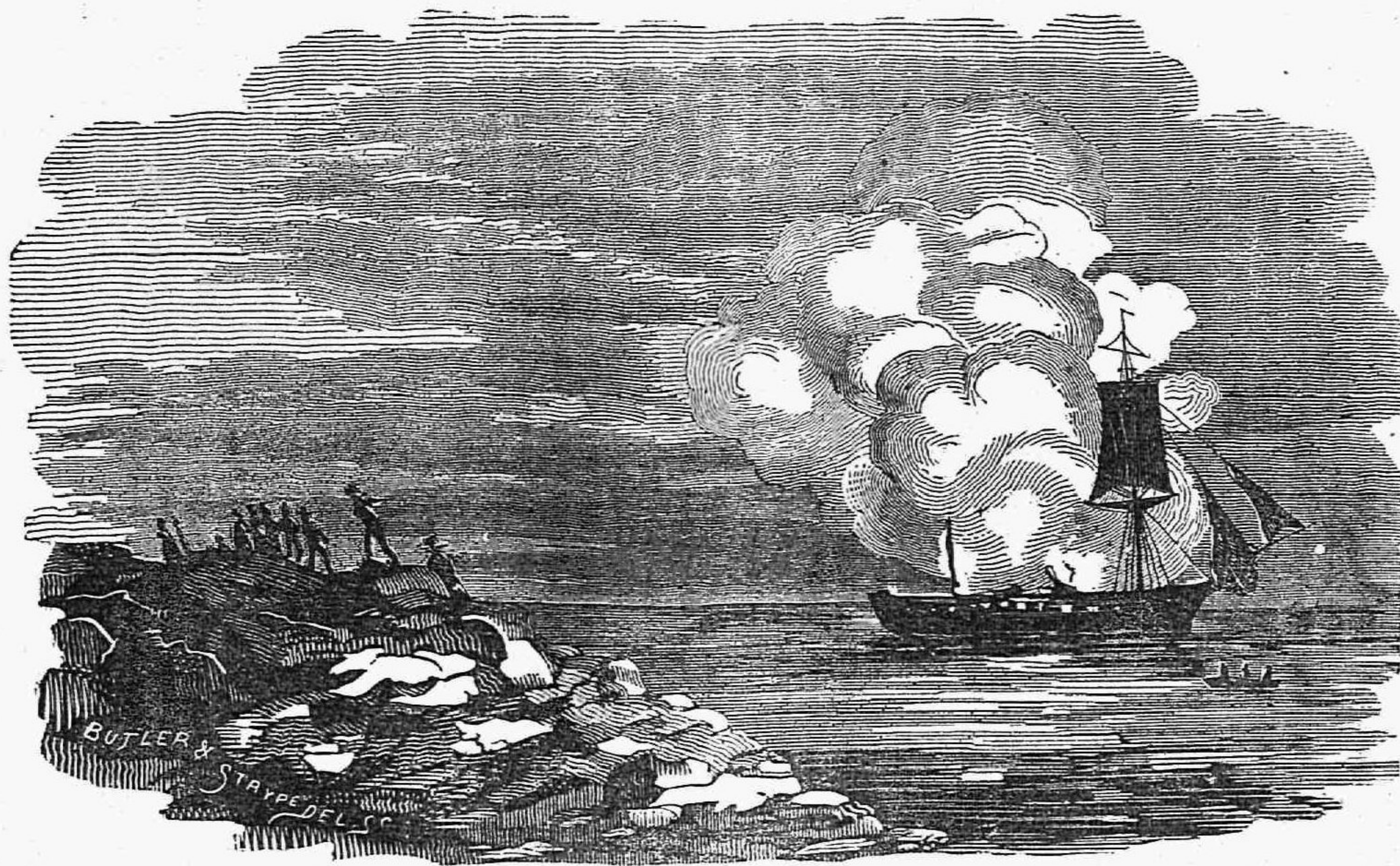
good fortune, our hero proceeded up the San Bernard River and taking possession of the best tract he had purchased, laid it out for a plantation. The other grants that he had obtained, lay principally in the districts of Nacogdoches and San Augustine, all of which he determined to let lie idle for a while, except a small portion which he sold that he might turn the avails to the improvement of the favorite estate on the banks of the San Bernard.

He was now considered one of the most substantial and promising men in Texas. His appearance was elegant, his manner and general style of address was marked with a refinement that was the more striking from the general rudeness of the society in which it shone; and he evinced in his conversation a quiet intelligence and shrewd self-possession that won for his qualities of mind a high opinion. Joined to these prepossessing points, his character was not only without a blemish, but held a place in the general estimation that was due only to the very essence of integrity.

Thus qualified and thus considered, his company was generally sought for, and it is not strange that he became the cherished associate and intimate of some of the very best spirits in the country.

His brother Ashmore, who was really a man of scrupulous honor, had also been very prosperous during the same period that our young adventurer had been laying the foundation of his fortune; while the estate at Edwards's Point, still the residence of his mother, sister, and younger brother, had also received its share of the advantages of a progressing state of the country, in a doubled value. The family, therefore, which a few years before had seemed almost hopelessly broken down, was now not only restored to its original prosperity, but invigorated with a future prospect that promised unbounded fortune.

Thus stood matters in the fall of 1834, at which time the estate at Red Fish Bar was sold, and the widow Edwards and daughter took up their residence on the plantation of Monroe. It was about this time that the early attachment between Monroe and the daughter of Mr. Morgan was revived, and arrangements were made, which, had nothing intervened, would probably have resulted in their union. A train of circumstances, however, diverted that laudable result, and Mrs. Edwards and her daughter, under the charge of Monroe, left Texas and proceeded to Natchez, Mississippi. There



THE BURNING OF THE SLAVER.

the ladies took up their permanent residence, under the care of a relation of the family; a movement and a course of action that was probably dictated for the interests of the daughter, whose accomplishments and expectations were deserving of the fortunes of a cultivated region.

Monroe made a considerable stay in Natchez, and while there formed two acquaintances, the conjunction with whom was to impart the controlling influence to his future evil destiny.

The first of these was an elderly gentleman named Dart, who held in his possession some two or three hundred thousand dollars belonging to several banks of the state of Mississippi. This vast amount was the subject of a law suit, based upon charges of usurious interest against these institutions, and Dart held it to abide the decision of the courts. A man in this position was of course decided by such an acute speculator as Edwards, to be a most eligible acquaintance.—Therefore, acting upon this conclusion, a small outlay of personal address soon gained for him the favorable regard of the old gentleman; a result which seldom failed to attend our hero's efforts at ingratiation.

The second acquaintance to whom we have alluded, was one out of which evil and mischief might be looked for as the natural progeny. It was, in short, no other than a dashing courtesan, who had been brought to one of the hotels of the place by a gentleman who represented himself to be her husband, but who had left her for a period of some four or five weeks that he might make a trip to Tennessee upon some alleged business speculations. With his usual enterprise in matters of intrigue, Edwards devoted his attention to this lady, and having but few moral scruples to overcome, or hedges of restraint to break down, he soon acquired her absolute confidence and reaped to the full, the benefits of her cheap good will. But the lady had other qualities besides those of mere animal attraction. She had secrets in her bosom that were of price, and as that bosom swelled towards her new lover, it turned outward to his eyes the mysteries that it retained from indiscriminate view. She revealed her position with her travelling paramour, and confessed him a prominent member of a secret band of counterfeiters. An engraver by trade, his hand was perfectly skilled in all the practical minutiae of the profession, and a scholar by education, he was thoroughly versed in that

branch of his nefarious mystery, which embraced the extraction of inks, and the alteration and substitution of figures.—In the hours of leisure, the woman would dwell with a species of enthusiasm on the remarkable achievements of her lover's art, and as she gossipped, the cool, keen mind of Edwards would register each fact, and with perverse philosophy analyse its probable value to the schemes of life.

While one day listening thus to the triumphs of the counterfeiter's vicious skill, a project that had been casually spoken of by Mr. Dart, intruded itself upon the forger's mind, and though owning no similarity, formed a conjunction with an idea dropped in the prattle of the woman that fused itself in an instant into one daring thought. In that moment the mind was ravished of its judgment, and the conception which ensued from the sudden rapturous contact of the elements of thought, became definitely and firmly lodged. The forger resolved to make the acquaintance of the counterfeiter, and purchase his secret. Use it he might not, but the power to use it he was determined to possess.

In his conversation with Mr. Dart, Edwards had given him a history of the Mexican land speculations, and described in glowing terms the facility with which money might be amassed, by such bargains, and by bringing the tracts so purchased into cultivation. Mr. Dart, upon this, suggested a similar project in relation to large tracts of unoccupied land in Louisiana, to which old Spanish claims existed and were registered in the Havana; but Edwards did not seem to think this speculation as feasible or as promising as the first; whereupon the old gentleman, for the purpose of evincing his estimation of the superior value of the claims he spoke of, offered to enter into bonds, in the sum of forty thousand dollars, with any person who would guarantee to furnish him the original Spanish titles to certain tracts of land in Louisiana, that he would indicate. Edwards seemed impressed with this proposal, and it was the thought of it and of a certain mode of turning it to account against Mr. Dart, which had struck him so suddenly in connection with the science of extracting inks and forging signatures.

He projected an interview with the counterfeiter, which took place on the very day after the latter returned to Natchez. Without circumlocution he told the man that he understood he was a chemist, and skilled in the art of extract-

ing inks. He had no questions to ask, but simply wanted to acquire the knowledge of the process, that he might be enabled to establish with certainty and for his own satisfaction, the fact that a fraud had been practised upon him by this means. Beyond this, however, he wanted to know the secret ; he was willing to pay any price for it, while in the acquirement of the knowledge, he ex-

pected neither to ask questions, nor to answer any.

It happened that the counterfeiter when he received this singular proposition, was in distress for money, and being satisfied that the mere explanation of a simple process in science could not implicate him with a criminal offence or even impugn his character, he consented to the strange request, and closed with



EDWARDS EXPERIMENTING WITH ACIDS ON THE EXTRACTION OF INKS.

the terms. In a single day the art was fully communicated to the forger, and from that time for the next three weeks, the acids he had procured and placed in his trunk, were the subject of daily experiments. Finding himself, at length, complete master of the erasive mystery, he reposed upon the possession of the power, without any immediate desire to apply it.

When he had resolved to leave Natchez for his return to his plantation in Texas, Edwards again urged upon Mr. Dart the employment of a portion of his immense capital in the purchase of Empresario and Guerero land grants, but not succeeding in persuading him to that course, or any mere land speculation, he added another feature to the scheme, that

seemed to take a firmer hold of the old gentleman's mind.

He reminded him of the great want of labor in Texas in consequence of the Mexican restraints against the introduction of any but free negroes in their territory; but in the same connection described to him political movements of significance, which plainly indicated that before long, the citizens of the United States in that region, would throw off their allegiance to the Mexican government, and erect their department into an independent state.

"When that event takes place," said Edwards, "and it is not very far off, I have no hesitation to declare that slavery will be incorporated among the social institutions of the new State. Now, then, I will tell you how we will reap the first and richest harvest out of the revolution."

"Let's have it," said Dart, completely bound by the almost inspired earnestness of the Texan's manner.

"Listen then," continued Edwards.—"By reciprocal treaties in relation to the slave trade, between Britain and Spain, each party capturing negroes upon the high seas may convey them to their own colonies and sell them to a period of service, as apprentices. England sends her captives under this system to Sierra Leone and her West India Islands, and Spain transports hers to Cuba. These slaves, or apprentices, are worth for their full apprenticeship, about two hundred dollars a-piece in Havana. Suppose we invest money enough to purchase two hundred of these fellows; it is plain that by pretending to coast them for Trinidad, we can run them into Texas, where, on landing them in the nick of time to take the advantage of the new constitution, they may be suddenly converted into slaves, worth from one thousand to twelve hundred dollars each.

"The success of this scheme," said Mr. Dart, "depends upon a combination of chances, the first and greatest one of which is the period of the revolution."

"As to the revolution," replied Edwards, "that I know to be fixed. Several secret conventions already have been held, and the period for the open declaration will be determined upon before long, with sufficient time a-head, to enable us to measure our movements exactly."

"Very well, all that may be so," returned Dart, "but after we get the negroes landed, what are we to do with

them? You surely do not pretend that the new state, or nation of Texas as you may call it, will set itself in defiance to the whole world, and authorize the slave trade?"

"Certainly not! The State will be no witness to the transaction, and will therefore not be called upon either to recognise or disavow it. We will slip the negroes in at the mouth of the Sabine or the Brazos, convey them secretly to our plantations, and set them quietly to work without making a fuss about it. By putting them up for sale, we should authorize every man to inquire into our title, but by lodging them upon our own estates, and devoting them to increasing the products of the region, their valuable presence will be winked at. This is the way in which our wild lands may be turned to profitable account; and thus, by a bold stroke, of which every body will approve, we will reap the first great harvest out of the national independence."

"How much do you say the apprentices can be bought for in Cuba?"

"At an average of two hundred dollars, and some, at a great deal less, as those whose apprenticeships are nearly out, may be got for a very trifle. But at the first price, there is a clean one hundred and sixty thousand dollars profit; though in my opinion it will be nearer two hundred thousand."

"A splendid speculation, truly, if it could be carried through."

"It can be carried through, sure!" rejoined Edwards, with an earnest confidence. "It can be carried through *once*, certain. The novelty of the thing will protect it, and we will not need to try it a second time."

"Well, I'll think it over;" replied Dart, slowly, "I'll think it over and write to you on the subject. When do you go?"

"I leave to-morrow for New Orleans, and I shall leave that place by the first vessel up for Galveston."

"Well, notify me of your arrival at home, and by that time, perhaps, I may be prepared to speak definitely on this subject."

"You shall hear from me as soon as I take a look at things around me," answered Edwards, "and I doubt not that you will at the time of your reply, be as well convinced as I am, of the perfect feasibility of my whole proposal."

"I shall certainly then know something more of the social and political con-

dition of Texas," said Dart, "and after all, you know, everything is to be decided by that."

The interview was here broken off by the entrance of one of Mr. Dart's family in the room, and the forger took his leave. On the following day he set out down the river, and in three weeks afterward his foot was on his plantation, on the beautiful banks of the San Bernard.

CHAPTER VI.

Historical Discursion—Connection of Edwards with the Revolutionary movements in Texas—Condemned to Death—The Rescue—The outburst of the Volcano—The Negro speculation—The Voyage to Havana.

Mr. Dart had very truly remarked to Edwards in their parting at Natchez, that the feasibility of the grand schemes which the latter proposed, depended upon the social and political condition of Texas, as well as on the period of the predicted revolution.

This being the case, and the events we have hereafter to describe having been evolved from a certain state of things not heretofore explained, we must make a trifling historical discursion, that the true bearings of every point of our strange story, may be clearly understood.

In 1824, Mexico became independent of Spain. She then established herself as a republic, and being composed of several States, confederated them together by a constitution similar to our own. Each of these States was independent, except of those federal relations natural to such a compact. Each had its own Executive, its own judiciary; each elected its own representatives, and lived under its own laws. Texas and Coahuila formed one of these States, with the right reserved to the latter, to separate from the other, whenever its population should entitle it to such a course. Under these auspices the People of Texas invited emigration, and under these civil guarantees, the Northern settlers came.—Texas being the nearest to the border, received of course the largest part of the infusion. It advanced rapidly in prosperity and population, and all went on smoothly until 1832; when it was discovered that the Supreme Government at the capital, then under the control of Gen. Bustamante, was, with the consent of Coahuila, rapidly granting away large tracts of the territory of Texas proper, on pretence of raising means to resist the

encroachments of the savage border tribes. But the funds thus raised were never honestly appropriated. They went into the exchequer of the Central Government, which, instead of sending protection to the borders, distributed her servile and vicious military bands among the large sea-board towns, to overawe the People from complaint. Other oppressions were perpetrated which evinced the intention of Bustamante to subvert the constitution, under the guarantees of which Texas had been colonized.

At this point, however, the operations of the tyrant were suddenly arrested.—He had to grapple with a genius and a destiny superior to his own. Santa Anna declared himself in favor of popular rights; subverted the administration of the dictator, and with a face full of plausibility and a stomach full of promises, placed himself at the head of affairs.—Not knowing his character, it was natural that the people of Texas should sympathise with the defender of the constitution. They hailed the news of his success with a thrill of republican joy. They declared in his favor, and turning their enthusiasm to account, expelled, by a prompt and unanimous movement, the military mercenaries who had been placed over them by Bustamante.

Judging, that after these demonstrations in his behalf, they might reasonably expect liberal treatment and friendship at the hands of Santa Anna, the colonists agitated several reforms, and circulated a call for a general convention, to take measures to separate from Coahuila, and to erect Texas into a separate and independent Mexican State.

The Convention thus called, met in San Felipe de Austin on the 1st of April, 1833, and on the 13th of the same month had completed a constitution. The document was consigned to Stephen S. Austin and two other commissioners, to convey to Mexico to receive the recognition of the Supreme Government.

Austin was at first treated with considerable courtesy by Santa Anna, but a neglect soon ensued, that discouraged all his hopes. Finally, convinced of the failure of his mission, he set out on his return; but he had not proceeded far before the treacherous Mexican despatched after him an order of arrest, which brought him back, and consigned him to one of the most gloomy dungeons of the capital. He had learned too much of the despotic intentions of the tyrant for his own good.

This treatment of their Commissioner,

and of his mission, inflamed the whole People of Texas, Mexican as well as strangers, with the extremest rage, and the minds which would before have been contented to regard their department as a satellite of the Aztec Federation, now openly expressed opinions that the time had come when she should shine alone, a free and sovereign political planet.

This was the state of things when Edwards returned to Texas, big with the gigantic fraud which had found its inception, strangely enough, in the very germ of patriotic emprise.

The liberation and return of Austin, which followed after the lapse of several months cruel imprisonment, seemed somewhat to ameliorate the popular exasperation, but though it produced an outward and ostensible tranquility, it really tended to strengthen the original determination of revolt, by safening it with caution.

Edwards was not idle during the bubble of this popular turmoil. He stimulated the ignorant; he gave countenance to the obscure, he mingled his counsels with the influential, and he contributed his means to those expenses which are always attendant upon every description of preliminary organization. Cunning, plausible and sly, he was influential without show, and actuated by motives of gain, he was indefatigable in the exercise of the qualities conducive to it.

There were two parties in the State. The most numerous, and it may be also said the most influential, for it owned General Houston as its leader, was in favor of remaining leal to Mexico, but of insisting on all the guarantees of the constitution of 1824. The other party was for absolute independence. We may easily divine from our own knowledge of his schemes to which faction our hero gave his adhesion; and it may likewise be concluded, for the same reason, that slavery was a vehement article of his republican faith.

The preponderance of the conservatives in numbers, kept the superior energy of the ultras at an equipoise; and notwithstanding the increasing encroachments of the Central Government in the shape of fresh restrictions upon commerce; new taxes; extortions for the recognition of legal land claims; expulsions of the most worthy colonists from office to make room for the most obnoxious natives;—notwithstanding these and various minor oppressions, the popular volcano was only allowed to simmer and rumble in a pent-up confine. But an

event was near at hand to precipitate its outburst. An edict was passed at Mexico which required of the People the surrender of their private arms—a proceeding that would render them powerless to tyranny, as well as place them at the mercy of the savage border tribes. The illusion was at an end. The independence of the States had passed away, and the People who had come into the country under guarantees of civil liberty and extended franchise, were to be reduced at a blow to the condition of abject vassals. With the brave there is no debatable ground between liberty and death. The most doubtful were resolved; the most conservative aroused. Each man grasped his weapon as if it were the guardian of his honor, or the emblem of his salvation. There breathed but one sentiment from every freeman between the Sabine and the Rio Grande—resistance.

Vigilance Committees were organized in every direction, and that of Brazoria county, of which Edwards was a member, proposed a General Convention of delegates from each county, to devise measures for the public safety. The proposal was carried, and the Consultation fixed for the ensuing month of October (1835).

In the meantime preparations were made by the Mexican authorities to enforce the edict of the Dictator. On the other hand, bands of colonists traversed the country between the principal towns, and encouraged each other for the approaching struggle. One of these parties, consisting of Edwards, the celebrated Colonel Travis, who perished subsequently at the massacre of the Alamo, and the late Judge Jack, proceeded to Anahuac, on the eastern shore of Galveston Bay, then under the military command of Colonel Bradburn, an American in the service of Mexico. Their bold demeanor soon rendered them amenable to suspicion, and their contemptuous disregard of the Mexican authorities, when interrogated as to their designs, subjected them to the malignant hostility of the commanding officer. They were arrested as seditious malcontents, and disdaining any compromise or denial of their intentions, were, after a brief trial, condemned to be shot.

Apprehending an evil issue of their enterprise, as soon as they had fallen under the invidious surveillance of Bradburn, between whom and Travis a bitter feud had long existed, Edwards had, immediately on the arrest of himself and



RESCUE OF EDWARDS, COL. TRAVIS, AND JUDGE JACK,
FROM EXECUTION.

his companions, despatched a messenger across the bay to the well known Colonel Patrick C. Jack, the brother of his fellow prisoner, for aid. The measure proved to be a providential one, for on the morning of the execution, after they had been led forth, and just as the file of soldiers, who were to consummate the sentence with their muskets, had drawn up in line, the succor came. A wild hurrah startled the mercenaries from their murderous purpose, and leading on a desperate little band, Colonel Jack burst into the enclosure, and scattered the guards in every direction. Fearing a rally and a sudden concentration of superior force, the rescuers retreated to the shore, and, re-embarking, made their way back to Brazoria.

About the time this affair was transpiring at Anahuac, an event of equal moment took place at Gonzales, a little town in the interior of the country, on the eastern bank of the Guadalupe. It had been known at that place for some days that a band of Mexican dragoons, numbering several hundred, were advancing from Bexar to seize a piece of artillery that had long defended the former town from the incursions of the Indians. The warning was circulated far and wide, and by the time the dragoons arrived there were muskets and brave men enough collected to give them a Lexington reception. The cannon aided in its own defence, and Austin arriving at the scene of the struggle, was elected General of the forces, and in the exercise of his new authority, drove the enemy in confusion back to Bexar.

The war of insurrection had now fairly commenced; but not yet the war of independence, for the Consultation which met at San Felipe in the same month, after having, in their first enthusiasm, passed a resolution for an absolute declaration of Independence, rescinded the vote and decided for a Provisional Declaration. This singular result was produced by Houston, who prevailed upon a member of the majority to call for a reconsideration, on the ground that an absolute declaration of independence was premature and ill judged.*

It was plain, however, to all observing minds, that an absolute declaration must inevitably follow from the movements that were then afoot, and Edwards, in accordance with this view, perceived that the time had arrived to urge his negro project with Dart. He had had enough

of peril, and setting aside the question of his courage, he preferred profitable speculation to barren danger and hard knocks. Doubtful, probably, of his qualities for military enterprise, he considered it convenient that others should win the battles while he devoted himself to another kind of gain; and as this was a philosophy which promised to pay for itself, it was the more readily adopted. Everything was apt, and he had satisfactorily assured himself that the institution of slavery would be among the gifts of independence. He wrote to Dart to this effect, and also furnished him with the evidence that affairs were rapidly consummating to the desired crisis for their project. Dart conceded to his views, and two or three letters passed as to the mode of subscribing the necessary means. It had been agreed that each should make an equal contribution, but as Edwards had no ready cash, he was to place in Dart's hands *empressario* land grants to the value of fifty thousand dollars, as security for his portion of the capital. Having effected this arrangement, our hero sailed for New-Orleans, and there, delivering the deeds of his Nacogdoches tracts to Dart, received from him the amount of fifty-two thousand dollars in money.

It may be supposed that so large a sum as this would have tempted such a mind as his to an immediate appropriation—a course which he might have taken with some impunity from the law, from the nefarious consideration involved in its possession; but his confidence in his project, and the pride of a tortuous genius in the success of its conceptions, probably ensured his fidelity to the superior wickedness of the original design.—He set sail for the Havana, having previously chartered two small vessels, and given directions for them to follow him after a certain time.

He commenced his operations as soon as he arrived at Havana, by presenting the letters which he bore to the leading merchants of the place, and by representing himself as the agent and part owner of a large estate near Trinidad de Cuba, on the southern coast of the Island. To provide against any difficulties that might arise out of his ignorance of the place, he confessed that he never had been there, but had bought his share in New Orleans, on the representations of creditable persons, and had accepted as a guarantee of the justice of the bargain, a large sum of ready money to be expended in purchasing apprentices to labor on the plantation. The display of his means

* Lester's "Houston and his Republic."

gained an absolute credence for a story which none were inclined to doubt, and the ingenious deceiver found every thing jumping to his hand.

Thus fondled by good fortune, he set about his task with such industry that in a few days he had laid out the greater portion of his money, with an inviting market still before him.

He was, however, too artful a manager and too subtle a financier to part with it all and be honest with his partner. Though sanguine of success, he bethought himself of the remote chance of failure, and in care for that contingency unscrupulously appropriated to himself twelve thousand dollars of the amount placed at his control, laying it on the price of the slaves, for the purpose of concealing the subtraction from the eyes of Dart.—“This amount,” thought he to himself, “will make full amends to me for all miscarriages; while, if I succeed, it is but fair that such a premium should be my reward for the conception of the project, and the personal trouble and danger I have undertaken. It will not do for a man of my experience to entirely fail in anything.”

Pluming himself with this ingenious logic, the keen contriver then wrote out to Dart, representing that everything went on swimmingly, save that they had fallen upon an unfortunate state of the slave market, the price of negroes being unusually high. That owing to this fact the funds had not stretched to the measure of their calculations, and it would be necessary, in order to complete the speculation, to have twenty thousand dollars more. In reply to this letter Mr. Dart himself came out in the schooner Shenandoah, Captain M., which was one of the vessels chartered for the scheme. After a brief examination into matters on his arrival, he obtained an order for \$20,000 on Messrs. Knight & Co., which being handed to Edwards, enabled him to complete his purchases with the same secret per centage as before.

Having at length obtained one hundred and eighty-five fine negroes, which were about as many as his little craft could safely carry, Edwards, leaving Dart behind, set sail on the 12th February, 1836, bound for Trinidad de Cuba, *via Texas*.

It was his intention, at the time of starting for the incipient republic, to land the cargoes in the Sabine, and drive the negroes thence over land to his plantation, and it was his desire to reach his des-

tinuation just before the declaration of independence should take place.

His object in preferring the mouth of the Sabine for the debarkation, was that in case any attempt should be made to prosecute him for the unlawful act, the question of jurisdiction might be raised in his defence, on the doubt whether the unlawful landing had been made on the right or left bank of that river—an important distinction, as one formed the northern boundary of Texas, and the other the southern boundary of the United States. The policy of reaching Texas before the independence, was plain. The landing would be in contravention only of the laws of Mexico and of the treaties for which she, as a nation, was responsible to the world. As therefore the colonists were up in arms against her authority, it was not to be presumed that they, with their hands already full, would turn aside for the vindication of her international obligations—especially to their own deprivation of a valuable acquisition.

These calculations were exceedingly acute, and exactly adapted to the exigencies of the time. We shall see in the next chapter with what success they were attended.

CHAPTER VII.

The second Negro Expedition—The Landing—The Seizure—The Arrival of the Negroes on the San Bernard—Adventures in the United States—New Villanies—The Veteran Gambler—Stupendous Fraud.

The little schooners laid snugly to the breeze from the hour they left the harbor of Havana till they made the coast of Texas, near Sabine bay. Then, however, there came a blast of ill luck from the north-west, which drove them out to sea, and so distressed them for six whole days that the master of the speculation was glad to compromise with his original intentions, and run for safety into the mouth of the Brazos.

As he had a right to fear, no sooner had he entered the river than his craft were boarded by the officer commanding the fort at that place, under the orders of William J. Fisher, Esq., the collector of the port, who had recently been appointed by the Provisional Government.

Though this was a serious interruption to his design, Edwards was neither confused nor discouraged by the untoward

circumstance. He immediately put his qualities of management and intrigue in requisition, and making his interest the subject of earnest personal entreaty with some of the most prominent men in the State, he succeeded in bringing an influence to bear on the local authorities, which allowed him to retain possession of the negroes upon giving bonds to hold them subject to any subsequent adjudication. This result was the more easily accomplished, from the fact that the Government was at that precise time too much engrossed in making preparations to resist an invasion of the province, already commenced by Santa Anna, to attend to any business which did not own a collateral importance.

Triumphing by these means and through these circumstances, Edwards marched off his dusky spoil to the interior, and landed them upon his plantation as absolute a possession as if no violence or fraud had tainted their acquirement. The negroes who had been purchased free were slaves for life, for the voice of their wrongs was feeble in comparison with the influences of wealth and the temptations of national ambition. Indeed, every thing seemed to jump against their welfare, for on the very day of their arrival at their new home, the Declaration of Independence, which sealed their fate, was made.

Edwards was now a rich man; one of the richest in Texas. Too rich by far, according to his own impressions, to risk an untimely end in the perils of the revolution, just as he was qualified to enjoy all the costly luxuries of life. So, entrusting the care of his estate to his brother Ashmore, and raising a few thousand dollars on loan, and by sale of a portion of his lands, he left for N. Orleans in time to escape a share in the battle of San Jacinto. The large sum of money he took with him to New-Orleans gave him a high credit in that city, and he easily found his way into the most wealthy families as an honored guest. Having enjoyed himself sufficiently in the society of the Crescent City, he proceeded to Natchez for the purpose of a business interview with Dart. No honorable division of the proceeds of their nefarious speculation was, however, the object of this visit. The immense sum that had been so easily acquired, was too tempting a possession to be fairly shared. The ingrain swindler therefore only occupied his mind as he approached the residence of his opulent accomplice, with cogitations

as to how he should delay an investigation and final settlement of their affairs.

On meeting Dart he entered into a verbose statement of the difficulties he had encountered, magnifying every circumstance and trebling every expenditure he had incurred in relieving himself from the difficulties of the seizure. By these representations he impressed upon his partner such a credit for his extraordinary services, that he disposed him to receive all his statements and suggestions for the future, without doubt or hesitation. Finding him at length worked to proper mood, Edwards, in conclusion, represented that it would be necessary to allow matters to remain entirely undisturbed for several months, as during the superior excitements of the war, the negroes would be lost sight of altogether, and by the time tranquillity should be restored, there would be none to question the validity of their condition.

Dart acceded to this plausible advice, and Edwards, having accomplished all that he desired in that quarter, returned to New-Orleans, and took passage for Mobile. Having possessed himself of letters to the first citizens of the place, his entry into society there was quite as brilliant as that of New-Orleans, and his credit among commercial men stood equally high. Taking advantage of this favorable state of things, Edwards made sale to two respectable citizens, of lands to a considerable amount, the titles to which, having subsequently proved to be worthless, justify the impression at this date, that they were forged. But not satisfied with the villainy of this transaction, the rascal deliberately entered into an enterprise of a much more heinous character. He succeeded in engaging the affections of a young lady of great beauty and accomplishments, and perverting her pure sentiments to the rank service of an intrigue, he turned her good will to the purpose of her ruin. The amour was maintained for some time, but the secret at length beginning to eke out, the seducer was fain to make arrangements for departure. While thus determining, his intentions were accelerated by private information that the affair had just come to the knowledge of the lady's family. He was, therefore, obliged to fly precipitately to save his life.

From Mobile he went to Charleston, from Charleston to Baltimore, and from Baltimore to New-York.

After making a stay of some weeks



ARRIVAL OF EDWARDS AT HIS PLANTATION WITH THE
CUBAN SLAVES.

in the latter place, he set out on his return to New-Orleans, over-land, and down the Mississippi, making influential acquaintances all along the route by his prepossessing manners and reputable letters. In New-Orleans he used his credit to an extent which, notwithstanding his large reputed wealth, caused it to begin to shake, whereupon he concluded to return to Texas to supervise in person the condition of his estate. The fact of the country being tranquil at the time, had very much to do with this decision.

He found every thing prosperous on the San Bernard. All of the negroes were in fine condition, and their labor had already covered a large portion of the plantation with teeming crops. One thing had been done, however, which did not seem to give the gentleman entire satisfaction. His brother, who had been left in charge of the estate, having found it necessary during his absence in the States to raise some money for the improvement of the grounds, had sold a few of the slaves to certain planters in the neighborhood.—Monroe, on being made acquainted with this transaction, affected the most violent disapproval of it, and declared that, as his brother had not been invested with a right to sell the slaves, the bargain was null and void, and he would prosecute for their recovery. He was as good as his word, but the legal proceeding resulted only in an arrangement, by which the unprincipled swindler received in compromise of his demands about one-third of the sale price; Ashmore himself bearing nearly the whole of the loss.

It was about this time, as it appears by the data in our possession, that the nefarious forecast of the swindler perceived that the time had come to take the preliminary steps for the eventual chiseling of Dart out of his share of the proceeds of the negro speculation. This conception would call into requisition the knavish mystery which he had learned in Natchez from the counterfeiter. Taking, therefore, two of the numerous letters which had been written to him by Dart, during their long correspondence, he by dint of pains and care succeeded in extracting every portion of the writing save the signature of "C. DART," written in a very heavy hand at the bottom of the letters. Having made the erasure to his satisfaction, without a trace of the original context left, he set himself to work to frame two instruments; one for the sale by Dart of all his interest in the negroes, the other acknowledging the receipt of some old Spanish titles to lands in Loui-

siana, for which the signer had conditioned to pay the sum of \$40,000. The preparation of these instruments gave him a great deal of trouble, but having at length drawn them with sufficient formality and care to stand the keen sword's play of the law, he transferred them carefully upon the sheets he had prepared, taking care to add to each of the signatures a seal, to give them enduring force.

Nothing now remained to be done to give the papers virtue, but the addition of the names of witnesses to their execution. This, however, was the most difficult exploit of all, for the signatures of the witnesses must necessarily be genuine, as they would otherwise deny all knowledge of them if ever interrogated on the subject. There was no resource, therefore, but to get up a mock transaction, in which a person must be found to represent Mr. Dart, that the witnesses to the bond might be thoroughly misled. This contrivance was a daring one, and without many adventitious circumstances must fail; but the forger had conceived the scheme on the strength of an idea, which would enable him to calculate almost with certainty upon success.

During a temporary stay at Baton Rouge, on his last visit to the United States, he had fallen in with a veteran gambler, who bore the most amazing likeness to Mr. Dart. The circumstance was not lost upon his keen and active mind; the thought instantly struck him, that there might be a time when the resemblance could be turned to good account. Actuated by these calculations, he made acquaintance with the sharper, and soon accomplished a familiarity that gave him the measure of the fellow's morals. He was just the man to be a friend at a pinch, "for a consideration," and Edwards had just the mind to appreciate the qualities of such a philosopher; so he set him down in his books as a man to be remembered. He made himself acquainted with his history, his habits, and ascertained the usual range of his professional excursions, that he might always know where to look for him when need required.

This was the man who thrust his mischievous likeness into the toiling brain of the forger as he sat poring upon his spurious instruments in his private chamber on the San Bernard. The idea was apt and the strife of thought was done. The puzzling mists were lifted from the scheme; nothing remained but a mere routine of mechanical arrangement. First

of all, it was necessary to find the gambler and engage him in the artifice; next to secure the presence, in Texas, of Dart himself at the exact time of the perpetration of the fraud, that no afterclap in the shape of an alibi should turn up to overthrow the trick.

Having travelled over and around the whole surface and circumference of his plan, again and again, with undiminished confidence, the forger arose from the table with a determination to make arrangements on the following day to pay another visit to the States, to set the scheme in motion.

Preliminary to all other measures, he effected a reconciliation with his brother Ashmore, expressing the most profuse regrets at the course he had pursued in relation to the sale of the negroes, and tendering a compensation in land for the money which he had sacrificed to preserve his motives from impeachment.

The brother, like a brother, forgot the rough points of the mean transaction, in what seemed the generous contrition of the latter hour. He could not, however, be prevailed upon to again assume charge of the estate, but the forger extorted from his softened temper a promise that he would have an eye to the general conduct of the overseer, and the operations of the laborers.

Having made these satisfactory provisions for the safe operation of his domestic business, Edwards set out for the United States. Proceeding directly to Baton Rouge, he sought for the gambler, and was fortunate enough to find him in the first hour of his arrival. The condition of the veteran had not changed for the better since he and Edwards had previously met. Indeed, fortune had not only treated him very scurvily in the windfalls of his vocation, but downright ill luck had laid him by the heels for several months with a malignant fever. He was recovered from his physical ailment, but his pockets were still famished and gave no symptoms of recovery.—This was just the condition in which Edwards desired to find him, as there would be less need of delicacy or hesitation in making his nefarious proposal. But even villany naturally seeks to conceal its most heinous shades from its nearest intimates, and Edwards, yielding to this law, trumped up a story against Dart, in which he represented he had suffered great hardships at his hands.—He drew an artful picture of fictitious losses incurred for his advantage, but for which that person abstained from any

compensation. "What makes it worse," said the plausible forger, "is that he does not pretend to deny vast obligations and indebtednesses that overbalance all the interest he claimed in my estate, in confession of which he has drawn instruments of release of his interest and of compensation for my dues. But these, to avenge a recent spite, he now meanly refuses to acknowledge."

"I do not exactly understand how that can affect you, if the papers are properly drawn and signed," said the gambler.

"The instruments," replied Edwards, drawing out the forged papers, "bear seals as you see; they involve claims for land, and therefore must be regularly witnessed to be valid." The forger then, after dropping a letter or two of Dart's that the gambler might compare the signatures, continued that Dart relied very much upon the fact that the papers were not witnessed, inasmuch as many portions of the claims confessed in them could not be proved. "It is plain, therefore," added he, despondingly, "that unless I can manage to get the bonds staunchly witnessed, I shall be cruelly defrauded of my rights."

The gambler confessed a deep sympathy for his young friend's distresses, and declared that any measures were justifiable to accomplish the desired object. Edwards then broke to him his proposition, explaining at the same time the extraordinary likeness which he bore to Dart, and the facility with which he could represent him in a place where both of them were almost entirely unknown. "Besides," added the forger, "you will incur no risk, as you will vanish almost as soon as you have appeared; while I, who will be known and recognized by each of the witnesses, will take the brunt of the transaction."

A story as insidious as this, might have won a conscience less flexible than the gambler's, and when Edwards signified that he should receive a bonus of a thousand dollars and travelling expenses for this expedition in the cause of justice, no further eloquence was required.

Edwards then went to Natchez, and making a friendly call on Mr. Dart, insisted upon his taking a jaunt with him to Texas, if only for a few days, that he might admire with his own eyes the splendid improvement of their joint estate. Dart yielded, and in two or three days subsequent to the departure of the gambler to Galveston in a rough disguise, Mr. Dart and his wily partner followed for the same port; the shrewd forger,

carrying with him a duplicate suit of clothes of a peculiar fashion, similar to one lately purchased by Dart, at his suggestion.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length upon the succeeding particulars of this special fraud; suffice it, that Edwards so timed his operations that he had the gambler and the Natchez merchant together in Galveston on a certain day, when that place was more than usually thronged by some political convocation. Seizing a moment while Dart was engaged in his room writing a letter, the swindler took the gambler by the arm, and walking into a place much crowded with persons attending to business, pulled the two spurious instruments carelessly from his pocket. He then, after due observation, laid his hands familiarly upon the shoulders of two gentlemen, and with a bow and smile and an incidental nod towards his companion, said that Mr. Dart and he would trouble them to witness the execution of a bond, if they had no objection. At this the spurious merchant bowed, and the gentlemen, after in courtesy bowing back, affixed their names as witnesses to the genuineness of the instrument, without having the slightest suspicion of its fraudulent character.—This being done, Edwards held up the second deed, but wishing to obtain as great a number of signers as possible, he remarked jocosely that there was another paper of a similar description, but it not being right to saddle all the trouble on their shoulders, they would bother some persons else. With these words he caught the arm of his brother Ashmore, and a gentleman named Splane, who just then approached, and with as little trouble as before, obtained a similar endorsement.

Working their way through the crowd, the swindler and the gambler gained the street, when the former, grasping the latter by the hand, said, with a voice slightly inflected with excitement, "Farewell, my friend; we have done with each other for the present. Get out of these clothes and back to the States as fast as possible. I will find a better time than this to express my admiration for your services."

Having thus summarily disposed of his confederate, the forger hurried to his hotel, flushed with his success, to gaze in secret triumph on the man whom he had thus basely circumvented.

CHAPTER VIII.

Preparations to visit Europe—Edwards assumes the title of Colonel—Becomes a Lion in European Society—The Lady of the Opera—The commencement of an Intrigue—The bunch of Flowers—The pretty Ambassadors—The Interview—News from Texas—The Parting.

By the witnessing of the deeds Edwards had put the crowning seal upon his forgery and fraud, and it but remained for him to guard it from mischance, by disposing of Dart so as to keep him from the reach, or at least from familiar communication with the gentlemen who had signed the papers. He therefore took him to his plantation on the day succeeding the witnessing of the papers, and after a personal entertainment of him for a month, in shooting and hunting, he returned with him to Galveston, to see him off on his journey back to the United States. During this visit to Galveston, Edwards did not seek to prevent Dart from meeting with the witnesses to the bonds. He rightly judged that the transaction of the month before had become too stale to be reverted to, and he estimated that Dart's apparent acquiescence in the act by his making no allusion to it, would prove of great weight among the contingencies to come. The gentlemen who had witnessed for the gambler, had no suspicion that Mr. Dart, with his quaint, peculiar dress, was not the same man, and the virtue and validity of the spurious transaction in which they had had borne a part, became, by this simple means, indelibly fixed upon their minds.

Emboldened by the success of this difficult and masterly design, Edwards perpetrated two or three forgeries on a smaller scale against residents in Texas, by which he realized some seven or eight thousand dollars in ready cash. They were performed in every respect with the most consummate adroitness, in evidence of which we have only to refer to the fact, that they were never attributed to him at all, until his reputation had been exploded by more ponderous villanies.

His recent financiering profits in New Orleans and Mobile, being added to the proceeds of his late forgeries, left him master of an amount of ready money that confirmed him in the intentions which he had long entertained, of visiting Europe on a tour of pleasure. Already his habits of indolence had become permanent, while his love of pleasure, combining with his personal conceit, flattered him in anticipation, with visions

of the most alluring description. There were, besides, inducements which pressed him behind, as strongly as these voluptuous temptations beckoned him in front. The recent forgeries would soon fall due, and an ominous letter had crept to him through the post office, from Mobile, to acquaint him that the relatives of the young flower he had blighted, would soon call upon him with a demand for reparation for her ruin.

Moved by all these considerations, the swindler disposed of a further portion of his negroes to make up an outfit worthy of his consequence, and finally, in the month of December, 1837, he set sail from Texas for New-Orleans, with the sum of fifty thousand dollars in his possession, and a still unblemished character behind him. It will be seen that it was not destined he should return in quite as good an odor.

He gave no notice of his intention to visit Europe at the time of his leaving home, nor did he intimate any such purpose in New-Orleans, but only stopping in the latter place sufficiently long to obtain a few articles of finery and toilet ornament necessary to the exquisite, he took passage for Baltimore, assuming for the first time the redoubtable title of Colonel, which he subsequently sounded to so much account.

By virtue of recommendations of the best character, and the personal favor of the Texan agent resident in Washington, he obtained without difficulty during the brief stay he made in the capital, letters from some of the most distinguished of our statesmen, to our ministers at the courts of France, England and Spain, and also to the most distinguished of the political nobility of the two former countries.

Being at length fully armed with the credentials of respectability, Colonel Monroe Edwards set sail, in the month of January, A. D. 1838, for London direct, from the port of New-York. At the period of this adventure in European society he was twenty-eight years of age, and the possessor of an air and figure which are worth describing.

His figure was what is called the medium size, ranging from five feet seven to eight inches, though its delicate outline, his style of carriage and general bearing, seemed to give him a more liberal altitude. His complexion was light, delicately tinted wherever the warmer colors could be ornamental, and transparent in its fineness. His head was large and prominent, and striking as well for

its dress and finish as for its intellectual expression. His forehead, from its lowness and retreating form, did not take a full share in producing this effect, but his large, open, calm and thoughtful blue eyes, which seemed to absorb the very souls of those they rested on, made up for all ostensible phrenological deficiencies. Real deficiencies, however, there were none. The largeness of the sphere of intellect developed the powers it contained, while the forehead, but slightly apparent in height, was broad and massive in its spread, and unmistakeably marked with capacity of more than ordinary stretch. His hair, which was very fine and silken in its texture, was of a dark rich brown, being slightly curled at the sides, but waving plain along the front. His whiskers were of the same color, indeed rather darker through the aid of a dye that kept them uniform, and they ran in the most approved luxuriance under his chin. His brows were thick, but stood wide apart; giving by their separation an appearance of openness and ingenuousness to the expression of the whole face. His nose was straight, without being Grecian, but his lips were of a much less doubtful character. They were large, full and sensual, and marked unmistakeably the strong animal qualities of his composition. On the whole, the face expressed genius, decision, great energy of purpose, and equal self reliance. The criticism of a woman would have been that he was "a love of a man."

In manners, Edwards was quite as singular as in appearance. He was neither assiduous in politeness nor voluble in speech, though both would be natural for a man of his small education in endeavoring to make a sensation. But our hero was a shrewd observer of human nature; he knew that things cheapen when forced upon the market, and that it is better to prepossess your audience and trust to their favorable surmise, than to turn your qualities wrong side out to their conflicting criticism. His manner was therefore quiet, without being cold; affable, without being familiar. His conversation seldom volunteered itself, but when summoned in reply, was always clear and strong, while, if his purpose was persuasion, he had a manner of fixing you with his large frank blue eyes, that won your trust in his positions before you could mature an intention to debate them. Yet he was never eloquent or witty, nay, never sought to be; but still those blue orbs, and that soft,

insidious tongue, won more triumphs for their owner's purposes, than he could have conquered had he owned the honey of Demosthenes, or the wit of Rabelais.

With these natural gifts, this artificial stock in trade, and a round sum of fifty thousand dollars to back both, did our fashionable Colonel boldly make his first essay at European society.

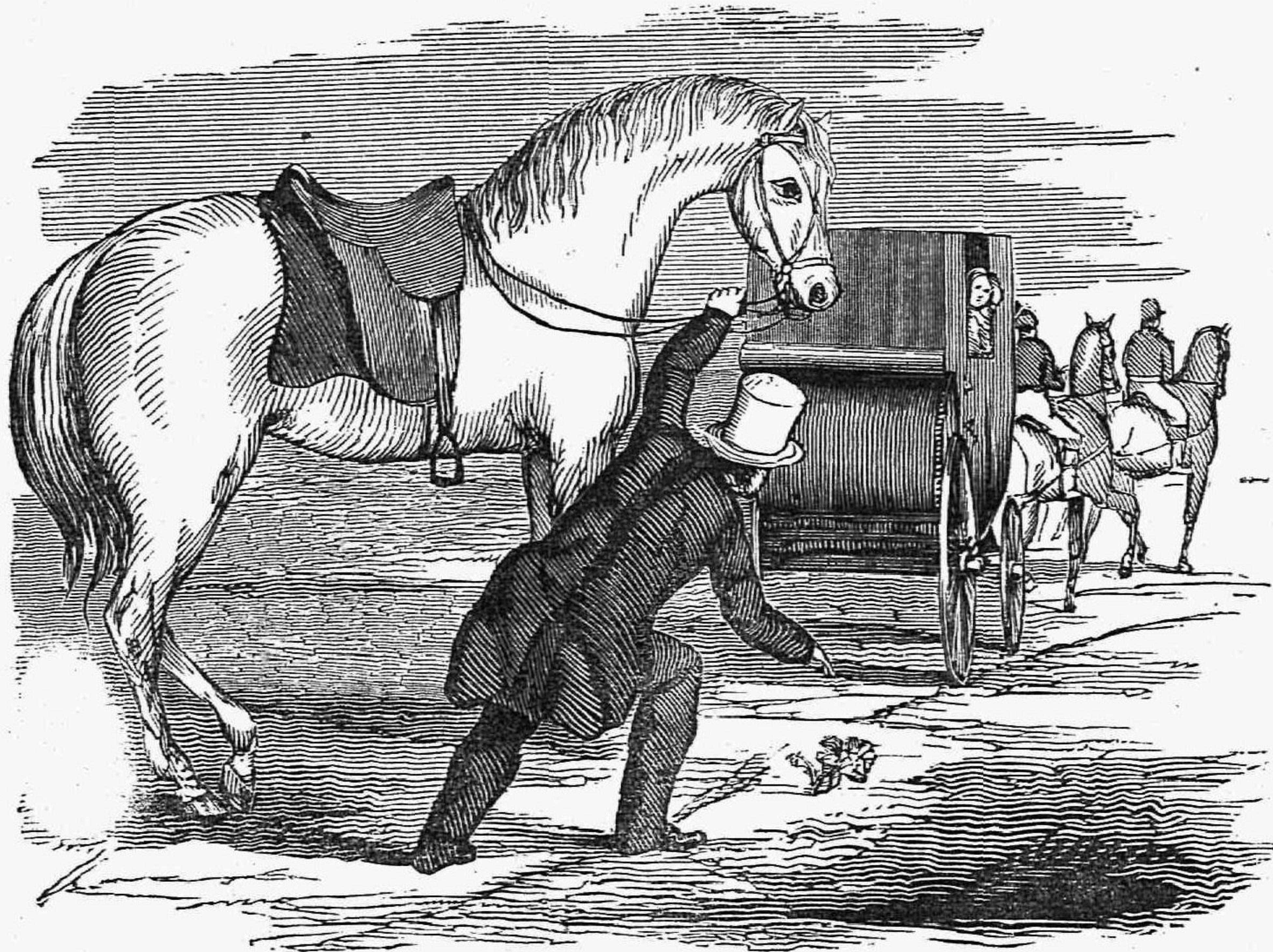
As may be supposed, he found but few impediments in his progress; fewer than if he had been a mere American, whose claims to fashionable standing are considered as of very doubtful character, for he was not only a Colonel, but a Texan Colonel, and one of the first of those strange savages who had beaten the Mexican Napoleon in the battle of San Jacinto. The Texan Colonel soon became the rage in fashionable circles, and if the desire had been great to see one of those demi-barbarians of whose atrocities the European world had heard so much, the surprise, after he was seen, was in due degree the greater, to find him, instead of a monster in the garb of Captain Kid, a very elegant gentleman, with a skin transparent with cosmetics, and a grace that appeared to be native to the air of courts.

The Texan Colonel was carried here and there. The Texan Colonel had to fight all the battles of Texas over, with a modest reference to his own share in each. He was dined with great assiduity, and in return he gave excellent dinners and suppers himself, at which he presided with an inborn grace. The ball season not yet being over, the gallant Colonel had an opportunity to figure to advantage also, at assemblies, routs and parties, and if his word is to be taken on the subject, many a fair one felt the influence of the fascinations we have described. He lived in glee and triumph, and though his cash suffered considerably in the patrician revel, there was some recompense in living like a duke. There was also the consoling thought that an opportunity would arise in the course of things, to redeem the wounds of his purse through the same avenues by which it had been drained. Keeping his eye always bent upon this chance of replenishment, he continued his expensive course of life, supporting a mistress, and sporting a tandem with the most ambitious bloods of the metropolis. The mistress, however, was a drug, and having too much good taste to waste much substance upon her stale comforts, the Colonel soon got rid of that expensive appendage to his establishment.

It was as well he did, for such a market as London could supply him at less price and quite a deal more to his satisfaction, as the following event will show.

A lady of great beauty and apparent distinction, who occupied a private box at the Opera, had frequently attracted our hero's attention and engaged his admiration. It seemed to him, after a while, that she was not wholly insensible to his devotion, for he detected her on several occasions looking steadily at him, and when he once or twice suddenly withdrew while her eyes were turned away, he noticed from the blinds of the box doors, the anxious glances which she cast about the house to see whether he had entirely disappeared. There was no mistaking this demonstration of the lady's interest, so, resolving to bring matters to a meeting, he directed his servant to be in waiting at the doors, that he might follow her carriage and ascertain her residence. These arrangements, however, were doomed to be of no avail. The lady did not appear the evening after they were instituted, and for a month of nights he was successively disappointed in getting a glimpse of his beautiful innamorata.—His fickle disposition could hold out no longer, and concluding that the lady had either left for the country or the continent, he gave up the chase, and turned his attention to more feasible intrigues.

The Spring had now opened, and following a favorite custom of gentlemen of spirit, he took frequent drives in a tandem phaeton, or on the back of a spruce stallion, on the fashionable drives leading out from the metropolis. One day, while caricoling in this latter style gaily along the New North road, his attention became fixed upon a splendid coach and four that was approaching at a slow and stately pace. He humored his gait to suit, in order that he might lose no scrutiny upon the equipage, and found his pains rewarded by catching a glance at his incognita of the Opera, just as the vehicle got abreast of him. The lady evidently recognized him, by the look with which she met his gaze. He turned upon his horse to look after the departing equipage, and while he was cogitating whether to follow it or no, he saw something drop from the window into the road. This was either a signal of parley or an accidental godsend, so without pausing to settle the indifferent problem, he set spurs to his horse to pick up the waif.—It proved to be a bunch of flowers, and by its side laid a perfumed and gilded card that had evidently been thrust into



EDWARDS RECEIVING A SIGNAL FROM THE INCOGNITA
OF THE OPERA.

the bouquet, but which the fall had shaken out. Thrusting the card into his pocket, and concealing one of his own carefully among the flowers in its place, he rode after the carriage, and hailing the driver, drew up by the window of the coach. The vehicle contained but the lady, and two female servants. The abigails, who occupied the front seats, seemed enlivened with the incident, while the lady, who sat alone, appeared covered with blushes and confusion. Edwards was smitten in despite of himself. The lady could not be more than twenty-two, and her great natural charms were heightened by a rosy embarrassment that was irresistibly attractive. Despite his marble effrontery, his accents faltered as he handed her the flowers, and when she hurriedly thanked him in the same agitated tone, he felt a sort of relief in conjunction with the bitterness of disappointment, as the vehicle once more rolled away. The impulse was again to follow, but his reflection came at once, and soothing the turmoil of his thoughts, told him that he could not fail to hear something further of the adventure.

His calculations hit the mark. Towards the evening a billet came to his hotel, thanking him for the service he had rendered, and acquainting him at the close, that if he would be at the north-east corner of Leicester Square at ten o'clock in the evening, with a white handkerchief in his hand, he would meet a person who would have a further communication for him.

It may be presumed he kept the appointment. Indeed, being under the obligations of a historian, it is our duty to say, in as many words, that he did.— Promptly at ten o'clock, a pert, tidy-looking young woman, whom he thought he recognized to be one of the servants of the carriage, came up to his side and asked him if he was waiting to hear from Lady ——. A reply in the affirmative drew from the little embassadress a direction to follow her, and off she tripped at a brisk pace along the walk. Stopping before one of the most stately mansions in the square, the interesting guide drew from her pocket a key, and cautiously turning the latch of the door without summoning the porter with the bell, let our hero in, and led him cautiously up stairs. The turn of another knob ushered him into a gorgeously furnished apartment, in the centre of the sumptuous elegance of which sat the beauty of the opera, tricked out in glistening satin and sparkling with diamonds.

The lady rose, and receiving the gallant Colonel gracefully, beckoned him to a seat near her own. Her next motion was to wave the maid who had acted as his guide, from the room.

There was no pause or hesitation between the pair in consequence of the novelty of their situation when they found themselves for the first time suddenly alone. The lady was too well bred to suffer any vulgar extremity of embarrassment, and the gentleman had effrontery enough to maintain his nerve in the face of the devil. A number of ceremonious compliments were duly exchanged; the Colonel drew his seat slightly closer to the lady; she evinced more and more vivacity as he proceeded with some account of his adventures in the wilds of Texas; and he, in return, listened with an attention equally marked, as she touchingly detailed the domestic distresses which had made her the victim of a separate establishment, and rendered her an alien from the volatile affections of a husband, who was even then setting her charms at naught, among the dissolute beauties of the continent.

The sympathy of the handsome Colonel for the beautiful forlorn, was touchingly profound. He condemned the unfeeling barbarity of the neglectful husband in many a harsh apostrophe, and tendered his human solace and consolation with an air so tender and a strain so touching, that the lady could not choose but be affected. A glass of wine revived the spirits of each, but still the lady could not help reverting to her misfortunes and her loneliness, and the Colonel felt bound by every rule of gallantry and manhood, to tender her such recompense as lay within his power to afford.

It was twelve o'clock on the following day when the Texan Colonel drew on his yellow kids and issued from the portal of the mansion of the Lady of the Opera.

From that time, during his stay in London, his visits to Leicester Square were daily made; his former mistress was sent adrift, and he became the slave of a tie stronger than had ever bound him before. Things went on in this romantic style until a few days after the Coronation of the Queen, a ceremony at which our hero was present, when he received letters from Texas that aroused him from his voluptuous dreams, and warned him to hurry back, if he would save the estate which he had so guiltily achieved.

It appeared that Dart, having heard from various sources that Edwards claimed the whole of the estate and the entire ownership of the negroes, and having learned also that large sales of both had been made by the Colonel for his own purposes, had commenced a suit in the Supreme Court of Texas for his share, obtaining an injunction against the sale of any of the crops and the further disposal of the negroes, as his first movement.

The reception of this intelligence occasioned some uneasiness in the Colonel's breast, but a re-inspection of the excellent character of the forged instruments, restored him to his composure. Being thus reassured, he consigned the papers carefully back to his trunk, and sallied out to communicate his new intentions of departure to his innamorata.

There were many tears shed and woful sighs breathed forth in the house in Leicester Square; but they were of no avail except as a dramatic divertisement. The lady had to take down the puffing of her eyes as well as possible with rose water, and console herself in her bereavement with the hope of her gallant's early promised return. The Colonel could find no further consolation for his parting, than a large and costly diamond, which he wisely selected as the souvenir of his passion. The tender interlude being thus wound up, our hero took passage in a steamer, and returned with all speed to the United States.

CHAPTER IX.

Return of the Forger—Condition of Affairs in Texas—Interview with the Elder Brother—Plan of the Campaign—The Mississippi Water—The Forger and his Counsel.

When the Colonel arrived in Texas at the conclusion of his hurried journey from the British metropolis, he found his affairs in the exact condition that had been represented by his correspondent. His property was under sequestration, and the files of the Supreme Court bore the formal claim of Mr. Dart to the body of his estate. In addition to this, the old merchant was himself present in Texas to supervise the lawsuit and to maintain the lines of legal circumvallation, which were being drawn about the property in question.

The notoriety of these proceedings and the publicity which the old man had given to the unjust assumptions of his

enterprising associate, had drawn general attention to the affair; consequently the sudden return of the young speculator created no little sensation in the neighborhood of Galveston. Opinion however, was almost universally favorable to Edwards, for Dart's fortune had been questionably got, and though there were those who believed that the Colonel might have taken some shrewd advantage of the old man in the way of business trickery or excusable financial address, none suspected him of downright criminal dishonesty, or surmised, ever so distantly, that he was prepared to conduct the warfare of the suit with felonious artifice of the darkest and most tortuous grain. He was therefore warmly welcomed home, and the few who did not join in the general shaking of hands that greeted him on his arrival, were those only, who had experienced his want of principle in the early law suit for the slaves which had been disposed of by his brother. So far, however, as public sentiment was concerned in relation to that matter, the general impression was, that the course pursued in it by the Colonel, had been rather a retaliation of temper provoked by a conscious violation of his rights, than a calculation of meanness made for the mere sake of gain.

The Colonel obtained from his brother Ashmore a minute detail of all that had transpired during his absence. Having listened to the relation with the utmost patience and almost without a single interruption, he resigned himself to a complacent smile and thrusting his hand into his breast pocket produced the spurious instruments, and spread them with an air of calm triumph before his kinsman's eyes. The surprise of Ashmore increased in degree as he scanned the papers down, but when he came to the second document (the negro bill of sale) which bore his own certificate in connection with that of Peyton R. Splane, he rose to his feet and in a tone of strong indignation exclaimed:

"Why, what a consummate scoundrel old Dart must be. I recollect this paper very well now. I witnessed it at the time of the Annexation Convention last year. I did not inquire what was in it, but I remember well being in company with Mr. Splane when you and Dart came up to us, and that Splane and I witnessed the instrument at the request of you both."

"Just so," said Monroe calmly; "you have but to look at the date to find that this is the same paper."

"I see, I see!" replied Ashmore with

excitement. "But without the date," continued he, "I could swear to it, for I have signed no other document between you. If I had known that this was the paper I had witnessed, I would soon have driven Dart from his suit, without awaiting your return. But you never explained the purport of these bonds to me."

"I did not consider it necessary," replied Monroe. "I stated in general terms that the estate and negroes were entirely mine, and this I thought sufficient in a case where I never expected my title to be for an instant questioned."

"There is one feature in this matter that puzzles me confoundedly!" said Ashmore after a short and thoughtful pause.

"What is it?" inquired Monroe carelessly.

"I cannot conceive what end old Dart proposes to himself by this most absurd and unprincipled prosecution. He cannot expect to succeed in the face of these instruments, and unless he has fallen into lunacy and lost his faculties, he surely has not forgotten their existence."

"Ah, there's the villainy of the whole matter!" returned Monroe, for the first time pretending to evince a show of temper. "He is of opinion that they are lost and destroyed, and trusts to the ignorance of the witnesses of their contents, to carry his point."

"On what ground does he make such a calculation?"

"On the strength of this circumstance," replied the forger. "On my arrival at New Orleans, just previous to my sailing for Europe, a clumsy negro who had my baggage in his arms, dropped my portmanteau into the Mississippi. It contained these instruments, and a number of other valuable papers. I was not informed of the loss until all hope of regaining the valise seemed to be gone. I nevertheless offered a large reward for its recovery, having done which, I sat down and wrote to Dart the history of the accident. I mentioned incidentally and without apprehending any injurious consequences, that the instruments had not been recorded, a circumstance, which I remarked might be a very serious one, if I were dealing with a man of doubtful honor; but which in this case would only occasion the trifling trouble of fresh instruments to the same effect as those I had lost. The mail was on the point of closing as I sealed this letter, but it had not been despatched more than a couple of hours before my portmanteau was restored to me. I opened

it eagerly and was gratified to find that though the papers it contained were thoroughly saturated and discolored, they were not torn or otherwise impaired. You have now an explanation of the cause of the yellow tint of the instruments, and also of the rusty appearance of the ink, which you will observe has suffered from the chemical action of the Mississippi water."

"I perceive," replied Ashmore glancing again at the forged documents; "but how happened it that you did not acquaint Dart with the recovery of the portmanteau?"

"The mail was gone for the day, and by the next morning it struck me that it would be well to wait and see the nature of his reply. The circumstance proved to be a test. The old fox was too cunning to write an answer on the subject to stand as evidence of the previous existence of the lost papers and be a virtual recognition of the original transaction. Several days passed beyond the return of mail, when being convinced of his disposition to profit by my misfortune, I quietly secured the papers in my best trunk and set sail for Baltimore, without troubling myself to communicate with him again. You now perceive the denouement of the accident, in the present prosecution."

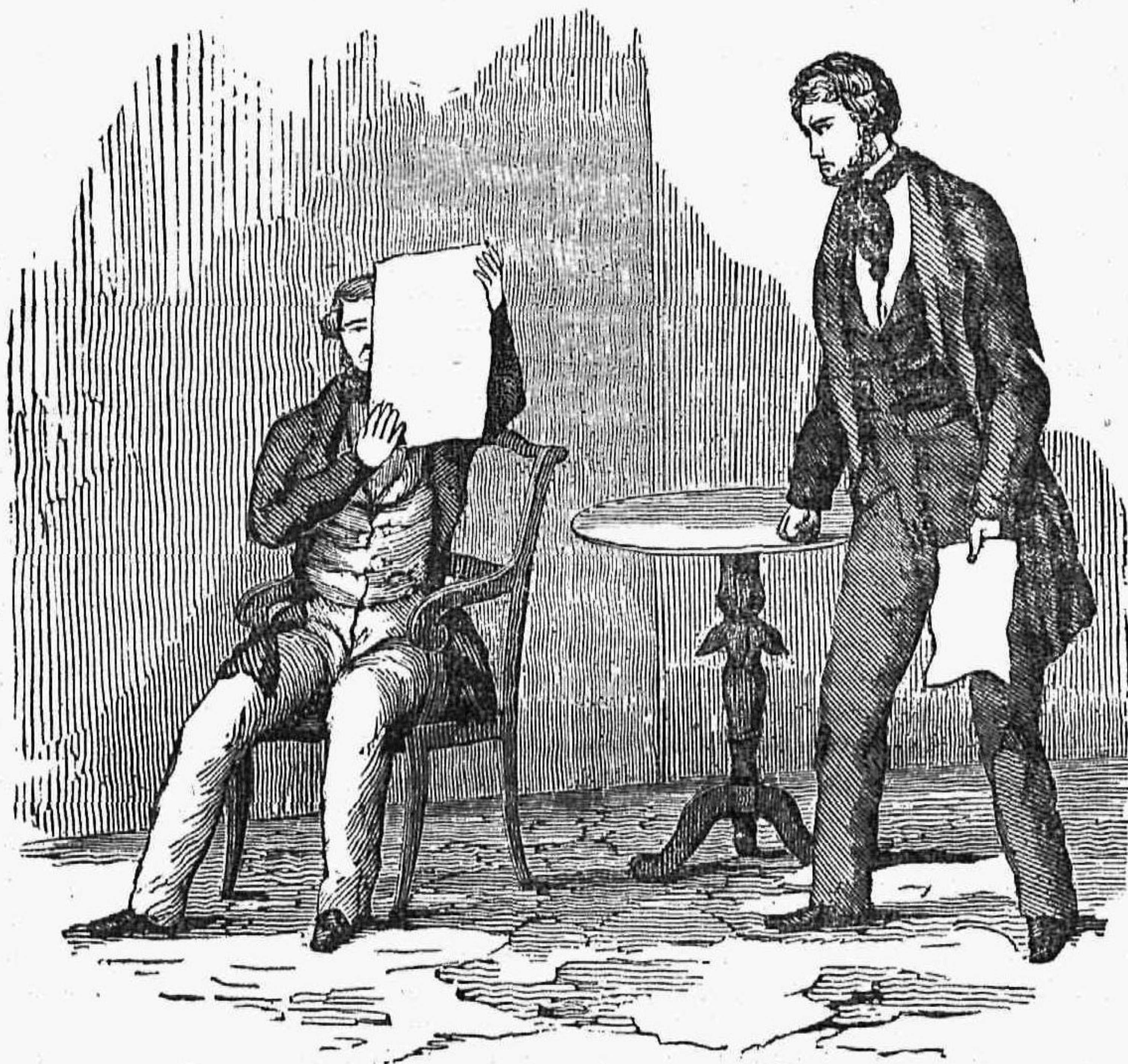
"I see it all, I see it all!" exclaimed Ashmore completely deceived by the ingenious misrepresentations of his subtle kinsman. "It is the most unscrupulous piece of villainy I ever heard of; but it is your turn to triumph now. The production of these papers will not only drive the unprincipled prosecutor out of Court, but cover him with infamy forever."

"Besides that," replied the swindler warming with his brother's enthusiasm, "the bond for the Spanish titles must produce me the full amount for which it is conditioned. It shall go hard moreover, if I do not get swinging damages to boot, for the interruption caused by the attachment, to the business of my estate."

"There is no doubt but that you will be entirely successful with every point," said the elder brother, "but your first step must be to put your case in the hands of a lawyer. You should also lose no time in having the instruments recorded. They have suffered injury by one accident and might be destroyed by another; but once they are recorded, the rolls will stand in their place if they should be burnt up five minutes afterward."

This latter advice developed the exact intentions of the forger, and he secretly congratulated himself that the suggestion of another mind had given a sort of warrant for the course which he had laid out to pursue. It was his desire to have the papers recorded at once, but inasmuch as instruments for the sale or transfer of negroes were never so disposed of, it was his wish to make that course appear to proceed from the advice of others. An additional inducement to give the

circumstance this color, was, that when it should be discovered that the instruments were destroyed (as was to be their fate immediately after they were duly registered) he could justify himself from the imputation of a set contrivance, by showing that the motive of the enrolment of the papers upon the archives, had no connection with the cause of their disappearance. In short this apparent division of the impulse would tend to break the natural assumption of the



EDWARDS SHOWING THE FORGED INSTRUMENTS TO HIS BROTHER.

other side, that the scheme was the consistent and deliberate contrivance of one vicious and tortuous mind.

"I shall follow your advice" said the the Colonel in reply to the last remark of his brother, but my first act shall be to secure proper counsel, and my next to reinstate myself upon my property by entering into bonds to hold it subject to the decision of the court. As for the deeds, they are safe, as I keep them in my possession, and I can have them

engrossed and filed at any time. Who do you recommend as counsel?"

Mr. Watrous* is my preference, answered the elder brother. He is remarkably successful, and if I mistake not, you have given him business before. If you have no objection, I will step in at his house and acquaint him with the case this evening, as I have business which takes me by his door. You can

*At present, Judge Watrous.

then call upon him yourself to-morrow morning.

"I will yield every thing to your direction," replied the forger, for to tell you the truth, the execrable villainy of this attempt to chisel me out of my property, has so astounded and confused me, I can hardly command any of my usual powers of management."

"In an hour afterwards, for the day was far spent at the time of the above conversation, Ashmore Edwards called upon Mr. Watrous and related the heads of his brother's case, advising him that the defendant himself would pay him a visit in the morning, and make him acquainted with the whole of the details in person. The counsellor, who knew Edwards slightly, glanced rapidly over the points presented by the elder brother, and taking into brief consideration the additional circumstance that the matter in dispute would exceed the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, gladly accepted of the case, felicitating himself in advance, on the prospect of the large fees which must necessarily accrue to the main agent in the settlement of such an important piece of business.

On the following morning the two kinsmen, together called upon the lawyer. The forger then stated his case in much the same terms as he had described it to his brother, and having concluded, quietly waited the counsellors's opinion. As was to be expected, he found it favorable without qualification, and received the assurance in addition to the promise of complete success in the defence, that they could not fail to obtain a verdict in a separate action on the forty thousand dollar bond, both for the entire sum, and the full interest from the date of the instrument.

"So far as *his* action is concerned," said the advocate, "we can defeat him without the production of our bill of sale, for he cannot attempt to establish his ownership in the slaves, without first showing that he obtained them through a gross infraction of the law. 'No man can take advantage of his own wrong,' is an established maxim of the law, and Mr. Dart cannot establish a legal claim through the medium of an illegal transaction. *We* rely upon our *possession* of the property without opening our mouths to impugn the mode of its acquisition; while he comes into court, confessing himself a culprit, and asks the laws to sustain and defend him in his contempt of their authority. They

cannot therefore entertain his action, nor can the allegations of a man who confesses himself thus grossly, disturb the strength of our position."

"I had viewed the matter much in that light," replied Edwards, "though my mind had not laid it out with the exactness and method of your present demonstration. At the time I obtained the bill of sale, it was necessary to a formal and proper adjustment of our affairs, but I was then, and have always since been aware, that Dart could show no legal consideration as the basis of an action to oust me from my possession of the property. The bond in relation to the Spanish land titles however, was absolutely requisite to my claims; and the obtaining of that security, was an act of necessity as well as prudence."

"You are right," said the lawyer.—"Though both were prudent, the last was vital in the premises. It is all in all sufficient, and I congratulate you in advance, on the complete success which will attend its production. To-morrow I shall have everything prepared to commence operations; and in the meantime, I shall only trouble you to procure two persons to become your bondsmen, that we may raise the attachment and resume our possession."

"That will be easy enough," said the forger, rising at this hint that the conference was over; "I will bring them with me when I call on you to-morrow."

"But," added he, reaching forward and taking up the forged papers from the lawyer's desk; "might I not as well have these papers put on record, for fear of accidents; they are considerably worn, and I have narrowly risked the loss of them on two or three occasions."

"It is not usual with such papers as the bill of sale," answered the lawyer, "but there is no impropriety in it, and it is best perhaps, to neglect no precautions against a man so subtle and so unprincipled as your opponent has shown himself."

At this concluding remark of the learned counsellor, the forger consigned the spurious instruments to his pocket-book, and with a graceful bow retired from the room.

From the lawyer's office, the Colonel proceeded directly to the county register, and leaving with him the false documents, directed them to be duly engrossed and officially entered upon his books.

On the following morning he visited his lawyer, according to appointment, and having learned that every thing was ready, requested that the proceedings be

delayed for a day, that he might make a call on Mr. Dart, in the hope to bring him to a sense of honor, and save him from the consequences of a persistence in his desperate folly."

This idea, though audacious in the last degree when considered in connection with the real circumstances of the case, seemed perfectly natural to the stultified vision of the advocate, and though it was no part of his business to promote harmony or encourage an early settlement in a profitable case, he could not but accede to the very rational proposal that the opposing parties should endeavor to have a friendly understanding with each other.

It was agreed, therefore, that matters should stand still, until the generous defendant could have an interview with the plaintiff, and seek personally to induce him by arguments of reason and appeals to conscience, to desist from his insane and unjust crusade against a man who had always been his most earnest and substantial friend.

Thus step by step, and with the most consummate art, did the keen swindler work himself into a magnanimous position against the darkest odds; deceiving the brother who had known him from his cradle, and extorting a reluctant admiration even from the astute counsel, whose knowledge of mankind had never before been baffled.

CHAPTER X.

Proposal of Compromise—Disruption of the Conference—The African Princess and the Grandee—Kitty Clover—Meeting of the Supreme Court—The Trial—An ominous Adjournment.

When Edwards called on Dart in pursuance of the intentions expressed by him at the conclusion of the last chapter, he accosted him with an appearance of the most extreme affability and frank good nature. Taken by surprise by this skilful method of approach, the old merchant involuntarily extended his hand to his opponent, and exchanged, almost before he was aware, a salutation that seemed very like a grasp of friendship. Having gained this advantage at the outset, and being satisfied with its effect upon the by-standers, for whom it was equally designed, he easily induced the old gentleman to excuse himself to those of his friends who happened to be present, and grant him a private interview in an adjoining room.

As soon as they were closeted, and

Edwards had stated the purpose of his visit, Dart commenced a series of querulous upbraidings for what had taken place. This, of course, provoked a like reply on the part of the forger, and criminations and recriminations followed on both sides for several minutes. Finding however, that this chance-current was setting him off his intended course of sailing, the Colonel promptly turned back to the main stream of his design, and abruptly advised that they postpone a settlement of the morale of the matter, until they had exhausted the more sensible and practical inquiry, whether a compromise of their difficulties could not be made without recourse to law. This hint recalled Dart to his thoughts; and conquering his irritation with some effort, he abstained from complaint that the direct conference might begin.

Edwards, however, had not the most remote idea of effecting any amicable arrangement. His confidence in his forgeries was perfect; and strange as it may seem, he was almost desirous of their test, for the pleasure alone of witnessing a conclusive triumph of his nefarious skill. Indeed, in the strength of this reliance, he would not have purchased Dart's endorsement of their genuineness, at a price anything beyond the probable measure of his own lawyer's fees. His pretended desire for concession and his professions of amity therefore, which at first seemed so earnest and so plausible, soon changed for the most egregious pretensions; and before many expressions had been interchanged, he gave Dart to understand that he considered in strict justice, the entire estate belonged to himself, though he admitted that his old partner was deserving of some compensation for the slight assistance which he had originally rendered towards the acquisition of the negroes, and the good will he had always shown in relation to the whole affair.

Dart looked fixedly at the forger, as if he were attempting to realize the monstrous impudence of this idea; but the Colonel, without seeming to notice this quasi challenge of his fairness, continued—

"It is true," said he "when the matter is strictly examined, that you can have no claim against me at all, the first cost of the slaves having been almost entirely consumed by advances out of my own pocket, to extricate the property when seized upon by government; but notwithstanding this, and all the personal dangers I have undergone to add to it

I am willing to forego a strict exaction of my rights, (which, by the way, if prosecuted, would really establish a balance against you,) and consent to a liberal compromise, rather than present the indecent spectacle of a quarrel between two persons who have so long been friends."

It would be difficult to describe the sensations of Dart while listening to the unparalleled effrontery of this address. Suffice it, that the indignation which kept boiling to his eyebrows as the serpent developed his treacherous folds, broke at the end into a storm of rage, which, had he been a younger man, would have swept to its recompense with something more biting than a fall of words. As it was, he could but unpack his heart of the weight of a rebuke, while his arm dared not venture to provoke the sharp answer to a blow.

While the old man was thus flouncing and spluttering in his passion, the ingenious swindler seemed to be endeavoring to suppress his impatience at these opprobrious terms. After a while, as if he could keep in no longer, he broke in upon Dart's tirade, and, with the air and tone of a man who had been goaded by ungenerous expectations into an undue sacrifice of his interests, threw up his open palms, and exclaimed—

"Well, well, well! for God's sake take all I have in the world, since nothing less will seem to suit you!"

"I want nothing more than what justly is my due!" replied Dart with counter violence.

"You do not, eh? Well then, I'll tell you what I'll do," replied the forger, "and understand me, I make this offer in good faith and will abide by it, if you will accept it on the spot. I will agree to restore to you one half the original amount you furnished towards the negro expedition with simple interest for its use from the hour I received it. If that is not a liberal offer, considering the costs I was subsequently put to, then there is no merit in relinquishing one's rights for the sake of peace."

When the forger concluded this magnificent proposal, he fell back with the appearance of a man who seemed conscious that his generosity must completely disarm dissatisfaction; but when he found Dart raving at him for a rascal instead of appreciating him as a benefactor, he curdled his countenance with sorrow, and seemed overcome with pity, that a man whom he really desired to befriend, should be so inveterate in his

obstinacy and so reckless to his own interests. Opening the door therefore in despair, he bade his stiff-necked opponent good-day, with the remark, "that if he were resolved to be so stubborn in injustice, he must even abide the consequences of a vigorous campaign in the law."

This expression was made loud enough to be heard by those in the room into which the forger stepped as he spoke; having effected which object, the admirable manager, with a well assumed appearance of indignation which he seemed struggling to suppress, made a slight bow to each of those who stood around, and passed out into the street.

The Colonel had now properly declared the war and opened his campaign. His brother had been enlisted on the *prima facie* justice of his case; the ardor of his counsel had been secured by his apparent magnanimity of sentiment towards the obdurate plaintiff; and the public, likewise, had been called to witness, that notwithstanding the strength of his rights, he had volunteered a compromise, in the hope to establish amicable terms without the harsh intervention of the courts.

On the day succeeding the foregoing interview, the counsel for the defence received permission from his client to proceed with his movements at once. The result of this direction was, that in the course of a few days the attachment was raised, the sureties put in, and the successful swindler once more located on his residence on the San Bernard. The proceedings on the part of the plaintiff meanwhile were also in progression, and the trial of the cause that was to decide all their disputes, was set down for the March term of the Supreme Court, at a sitting to be held in the town of Brazoria.

Edwards had, at the time of his re-entry, one hundred and thirty slaves upon his estate. Fifty had been sold, the largest share of the number having been disposed of to furnish means for his English expedition, and five having died since their introduction into the country. But what had been lost in numbers, was somewhat compensated for by the enhanced value of those behind, many of the latter having advanced from an age of youthful inutility into profitable maturity and strength.

Among this class of physical progressives was a lively girl of fifteen years of age whose child-like proportions at the time of her purchase, had become

nearly rounded into womanhood; her plump limbs being already touched with a voluptuous finish that would have made her fortune as a model artiste, had she but lived till this hour, and been gifted by nature with a Caucasian skin. As it was, her pelt was but little darker than a golden brown. But what it lacked in the softer tinges of relief, was recompensed by the zealous temper of her blood, which, catching the spirit of the sun that has so precociously enriched

it, triumphed in a warm glow over all the dusky shadows of her cheek.

The obtrusive beauties of this twilight Venus did not escape the nice examination of her unfastidious master. He had been in various regions, and had learned to appreciate with the keenness of a critic, all types and forms of excellence. The exigencies of travel, moreover, had overcome all his natural squeamishness as to colors. A thorough paced man of the world is a strange beast to the phi-



EDWARDS AND KITTY CLOVER.

losopher of a locality. He is by turns a believer in all the canons of custom, and by turns a recusant. When complexion cannot be had, he contents himself with outline; and on a pinch he will endure the lack of all favor or proportion, for the bare compromise of ardor. Every dish seems seasoned to his palate, and the trick of it is, an eager and intrepid appetite gives to the meanest stew the merit of the nicest excellence. The Texan Pacha was of this litter of

cosmopolitans; and despite the smutty hand which nature had laid upon the maiden's loveliness, he threw her his handkerchief, and honored her with particular compliments and special kindnesses.

It is due to the Colonel, however, to inform the reader, that his sentiment for the girl was not altogether without a justifying basis. She was the daughter of a Spanish grandee, who had been exiled to a small government office in

Cuba for some political misjudgements. Her mother, one of the slaves in his establishment, was said to have been the daughter of a Foulah King; and the story went that she was betrayed to the slave traders when a child by a malicious rival of the queen. However this might be, the mother of *our* maid was an undoubted African beauty, and whether a princess or not, she had a natural ease and gentleness of manner that would very much have graced one. During the period of our speculating hero's stay in the Havana, the grandee died, leaving all his property and effects to the administration of a widow, whose chief cause of domestic spite had for a long time been, the shameful fondness of her husband for the Foulah slave. The vengeance which had so long defied the Donna's knuckles was now, by the interposition of Heaven, within reach of her nails. The princess was sent packing at an under price, to a planter on the Canima river notorious for the severity of his discipline; and the bantling, who is now honored with our notice, was relinquished to an under-agent to dispose of. It was in the hands of this latter worthy that Edwards found the girl, and it was from him that he had learned her story. It was not strange, therefore, that when she broke upon him after a long absence, in the full bloom of voluptuous symmetry, he should have been favorably reminded of her origin, and have received a hint as to a due appreciation of her charms, by the episode of the grandee and her royal mother.

It probably is not necessary to say that Kitty Clover, for so the caprice of the Colonel had named the Cuban girl, was satisfied with her promotion. She felt the innate throes by which nature dictates the destiny of women, and no dissenting monitor had ever chilled her against the urgent doctrine of the senses. She therefore had no scruples to overcome; no blushes to suppress, and her civil dependence left her without conditions to make or calculations to consider. She gave nothing but what, at either this time or that, would become the windfall of some sooty Tarquin, and in exchange, she got ease, luxury, and a celestial lover. Who could blame her for the bargain? She was but a lively, frolicsome, impulsive young animal, with no intellect but that of appetite, and consequently no strong appreciation of anything that was not quite tangible, or that did not knock at the door of one of her five senses. The whole of the five were

absorbed in this case. There was no room for the entrance of a diversion. She was fascinated beyond redemption, and the brightest vision of a future state of bliss could not have been heightened into the color of a temptation in her eye. The banks of the San Bernard were her only Elysium, and the rosy-cheeked forger was her Phœbus. He absorbed the whole of her contemplations. Present or absent, her feverish fancy dwelt upon him with the passionate devotion of an Esmeralda; and those who are acquainted with the physical attributes of the Foulah race, will be reminded that our African girl needs not the addition of Esmeralda's *goat* to fill up the qualifications of the picture.

We have taken some space to introduce our dark heroine fairly to the reader, for we shall presently see that she is destined to perform a prominent part in our drama, and to prove herself something more than a mere leman to her Anglo-Saxon lover.

The Supreme Court of Brazoria county, Texas, opened its session at the town of Brazoria on the first Monday of March, in the year 1839. Among its earliest proceedings, the suit of "Dart vs. Edwards" was called up for trial. The counsel for the plaintiff opened the case and proceeded with their proofs, offering vague testimony only as to the consideration for their claim, and relying mainly on the frequent admissions by Edwards of Dart's joint ownership in the property in question. The counsel for the defence, now consisting of Mr. Watrous and the Hon. John W. Harris, offered but slight interruption to this course. They contented themselves principally with fixing the dates of their client's latest admissions; and when their opponents had exhausted their ammunition, they opened the defence, introducing first the negro bill of sale, and pointing to its date, subsequent to all the opposing proofs, and to the signature and seal of Mr. Dart, which stood so prominently at the bottom, as evidence conclusive against the claim which the plaintiff had set up.

The production of this paper was followed by an extraordinary sensation in court. It struck the opposing counsel with astonishment and confusion. Its effect on the plaintiff was electrical. He sprang from his seat as if he had been smitten with a sword, and glancing rapidly at one and another of those who sat near, as if searching for a victim to his rage, ended by relaxing his frame and

staring with a look of stupified surprise in the face of his counsel. But these discomfited gentlemen returned him only sour and reproachful looks, believing, as they could not help, that he had withheld from them a vital secret in his case. The counsel for the defence, on the other hand, enjoyed the general confusion of the enemy, while Edwards, who should have felt at least one pang of conscience and evinced one expression of regret for the agony of the old man who now saw ruin staring him in the face for having been his friend, showed on his lip a slight evidence of complacent triumph, which was a full demonstration of the coldness of his heart.

Recovering a little from their first surprise, the plaintiff's counsel leaned over to Mr. Watrous and requested to be allowed to look for a moment at the paper which had so unexpectedly spoiled all their calculations. It was granted, of course, and crowding along-side his legal guardians, Dart joined them in their scrutiny.

"Is this your signature, Mr. Dart?" asked one of the plaintiff's counsel, laying his finger at the bottom of the spurious bill of sale.

The old man took the instrument, but the more earnestly he looked at it the more violent his agitation grew. His hands trembled so that the paper rustled in his fingers as one has seen in performances on the stage. Finally, seeming to get dizzy, he handed the document back to his counsel with the despairing answer—"I believe it is! I believe it is!"

"Then we abandon the case!" said the advocate, who had put the question, with considerable asperity.

"No, no!" exclaimed Dart, in an almost frantic manner, and so as to disturb the whole court room; "No, no! I did not mean I signed it! I never signed such a paper! It's a piece of rascality from beginning to end! It's a forgery! It's all a forgery! It's a plot to ruin me! I never signed it!"

The judge called the plaintiff to order, with a threat to commit him for contempt; and silence having been thus restored, the case was ordered to proceed. The counsel for the plaintiff at this point arose and interposed a request that proceedings might be delayed for a few moments, to enable them to hold a brief conversation with their client.

The motion being granted, a close conversation ensued between the old man and his lawyers, the movements of

which were narrowly watched by the forger, though his countenance did not betray the keen anxiety he suffered.

Dart talked eagerly and with great volubility. It seemed as if his whole soul was engaged, and bent on flinging its weight upon every word he uttered. But the counsel listened with a coldness that gave little encouragement to his eloquence. By and by, however, their interest appeared to become aroused, and at length the elder and most inattentive of them, who had been engaged in negligently twirling his watch chain, started to his feet, and moved the court for an adjournment till the following morning, giving as a reason for the prayer, that certain facts had just been communicated to him and his associate which it was imperatively necessary to their rights should be duly examined before they were produced.

The motion was strenuously opposed by the counsel for the defence; but the court being itself somewhat impressed with the strangeness of the scene that had just taken place, yielded to the prayer, palliating the irregularity by reminding the defence that they were already within an hour of the usual time of adjournment.

CHAPTER XI.

The second day—appearance of the forger—the chemical tests—fluttering of the defence—the crime developed—what follows.

The counsel of Edwards retired from the Court in the highest satisfaction at their prospects. The defendant however did not enjoy the same degree of ease. His confidence in his case and in his forged paper remained unshaken it is true, but there was just enough of mystery in the mode of the adjournment to alarm his guilty soul with an indefinable dread. It could hardly be otherwise with a man who stood within arms' reach of the gallows, for the old English common law, which prevailed in Texas, made forgery a capital offence. Indeed, considering all things, he maintained his composure miraculously well for a man who put up so terrible a stake, and we can easily excuse him for a few twinges of regret at not having been faithful to his first intention of destroying the forged bill of sale and casting anchor on the record. Out of mere bravado he had kept the documents to over-ride every exception and deprive the plaintiff even of a quibble. It would not

do to destroy them now until the trial was concluded, but directly it was safely over, he resolved his first task should be to commit it to the flames. Before retiring to bed, he once more took the two instruments in which his life and property were staked on either side, and re-examined them with the interest of a man whose destiny depended upon the closeness of his task; then laying them carefully aside, he sought his couch with a tolerable prospect of repose.

Dart was otherwise employed. He had convinced his lawyers that the bill of sale was a forgery, and during his earnest conversation in the Court on the previous day, undertook to prove it so, if they would obtain for him the privilege of a day. The shape of the paper on which the Bill was drawn had been recognised by him as a peculiar form of foolscap on which he had used to write his letters, and of which he had at one time possessed a large quantity. This gave him the idea that the document was made out on the body of one of his own letters from which all the ink had been extracted save the signature which he saw was genuine. He came to this conclusion the more easily from the fact that he had read of such chemical abstractions having been performed, and his confidence in being able to prove it, rested on a further belief, that powers similar to those which had expunged the original context, could restore its legibility to determine the character of the imposture. As to the signatures of the witnesses, he concluded that they likewise were forgeries, with the exception of that of Ashmore Edwards, who he supposed was a co-conspirator against him and therefore a voluntary signer. Under this impression he determined to wage his vengeance and direct his criminal prosecutions equally against both the brothers.

But as a prelude to those ultimate measures of redress and satisfaction, it was necessary he should take immediate steps to expose the character of the forged paper. In this connection he be-thought himself of a gentleman named Andrews, who resided at the distance of four or five hours' ride on the banks of the Brazos, and who possessed all the knowledge of chymistry requisite for the purpose in question. These were the views which he had imparted to his counsel during the brief and hurried conversation that ensued after the first examination of the bond; and it was to afford him an opportunity to test their effi-

cacy, that the motion for adjournment had been made. While, therefore, the enervate forger was serenely reposing in his bed, the eager veteran was spurring through the outside shadows of the night to personally implore the chemist to bring his science forward, to rescue him from the arts of a villain. Wondering, but doubting, Mr. Andrews saddled his horse at the summons of his applicant; but though he yielded to the urgency of the old man's tears, he did not resign his doubts, for it was incredible to him that a gentleman so young, so rich, so talented and of so fair a fame as Edwards, could have jeopardised his life and debased his name, by a crime like that which he had just heard imputed to him.

Nevertheless, he would go; as among the strange things which happen in the world from day to day, a fall from honor in the case of Edwards might be one. Selecting therefore a few of the implements and tests that would be necessary to his task, he mounted with the plaintiff, and, side by side, the two horsemen returned to the town of Brazoria before day-break. Mr. Andrews had been required by Dart to keep secret what he had communicated, until the hour for his introduction in the case should arrive, but the former, in view of the importance of the matter to be left to his single decision, required an enlargement of that restriction, so as to enable him to invite Doctor Stewart, a skilful chemist and physician resident in Brazoria, to join him in his analysis. This being agreed to by Dart, nothing remained to be done, on either side, but to wait for the opening of the Court.

Before the hour for the commencement of proceedings, the court room was crowded to excess. Edwards and his counsel entered chatting and smiling in a manner that evinced their confidence and composure. Until notified by the crier that the court was ready to begin, they seemed employed rather in sifting the humor from a series of confidential jokes, than in wasting any thoughts upon the business of their case. The forger himself, appeared to be the very embodiment of mortal happiness and good nature. He was dressed with finished elegance. His whiskers were brushed with the precision of a waxen figure. Every time he laughed, clouds of perfume were gently shaken from his person, and when decorum required him to raise his delicate cambric to his lips to control the rudeness of his mirth, the flashing dia-

mond which his English mistress had pressed upon his finger as her parting gift, inspired the vulgar with a costly reverence.

The other side were more grave. The plaintiff was haggard with watching and fatigue. The faces of his lawyers were stamped with deep and serious concern. The contrast between the two parties was wide to a degree, and a chance observer, ignorant of the true characters of the plaintiff and defendant, would have decided, without hesitation, that success, as well as the moral justice of the case, lay on the side of the complacent swindler.

"The defence will proceed with their case," said the judge, nodding towards the defendant and his counsel, after having secured order by a preliminary tap on his desk.

"We rest on the evidence of our Bill of Sale;" said Mr. Watrous, rising. "We do not consider it necessary to offer any thing further to rebut the plaintiff's absurd and unfounded claim."

"We are satisfied that the gentlemen shall rely upon their bill of sale!" said the leading counsel for the plaintiff, with strong irony in his tone, as Mr. Watrous sat down. "We are quite satisfied that they shall rely upon it; but if it please the Court, we will take the liberty to disturb them of their composure by proving that it is as worthless as the wind, and of less weight than even the personal word of the individual whom we now feel obliged to characterize as their unprincipled client. In short," continued the counsel with increased vehemence, "we shall undertake to prove this precious bill of sale to be a downright FORGERY, skillfully prepared long ago, and gotten up by the plaintiff with a devilish forecast in anticipation of this our righteous claim. We say, sir, that we shall undertake to prove this, to which end, and without present regard to ulterior measures for the punishment of the parties implicated in the crime, we will now call one or two witnesses to the stand and submit this document to the test."

As soon as the excited advocate concluded this terrible apostrophe, every eye was turned upon the side of the defence; but to the surprise of all, the person so vitally assailed, so infamously denounced, did not evince the slightest emotion of surprise or fear, or even of annoyance. While his paid champions swelled with rage at the unseemly onset of the prosecution, he alone maintained an unruffled

smile; rocking on the hind legs of his chair, with his fingers in the arm-holes of his vest, as if he were an entirely indifferent spectator of the scene.

"We protest against this outrageous system of attack," said one of Edward's counsel rising in strong passion. "We will not submit to be branded here as a felon—"

"Then your client must not act like one," returned the other side, "and allow us to add, we will not submit to be interrupted, or suffer ourselves to be blustered from our just defence."

The court here interfered to restore order, and rebuking both sides for their unnecessary display of temper, directed the counsel for the plaintiff to proceed to call their witnesses.

Mr. Andrews upon this, was summoned to the stand, and having the forged bill of sale placed in his hand, was directed to examine it, and say, whether the sheet had not contained writing, other than that which now appeared upon the face of the document?

"We object to that, may it please the court!" said one of the counsel for the defence, promptly. "We object to it as the question has no bearing on the case. Whether he answer yes or no, it will be all the same: for, in the first case, I suppose that even the eager counsel for the plaintiff, will hardly expect to hold us to account for all the vicissitudes which may have happened to a poor innocent sheet of paper before it came into our hands. On the other hand, if he answer the question in the negative, it entirely repels their imputation. Neither way can the question or answer be of any use. We do not make this objection, let it be understood, because we are concerned for the reply, for we believe our paper is as pure as honesty can make it, but because we wish every thing conducted fairly and within the rules."

The counsel on the other side replied to this objection, taking the view that it *would* be a conclusive circumstance against the fairness of the bond if it could be shown that the signature of Mr. Dart, which had been originally subscribed to a letter on an indifferent matter, was the only portion of the original writing not artificially withdrawn, but left to stand godfather for a spurious and knavish substitute.

The judge endorsed this latter position, and allowed the question.

Mr. Andrews then directed his scrutiny to the disputed paper. After examining it with professional perseverance—

now turning it from side to side, and anon holding it to the light, he dropt it from his eyes and paused as if he had come to a conclusion.

"Well, sir," said the counsel for the plaintiff, looking at him for his answer.

"I think, sir," said the witness, with deliberation, "that this paper has been subjected to a chemical action, similar to that employed for the extraction of inks. Its color and the rusted appearance of the ink indicate such a process; but I cannot tell by simple observation, whether any ink has been really extracted from it."

At this period both the counsel of Edwards began to evince strong concern, which being perceived by the forger, who still maintained his imperturbable self-possession, he leaned gracefully towards them and remarked with a smile, "We shall wash off the iron rust, and take the color out of his testimony by-and-by, when we come to let him into the secrets of the Mississippi water." The lawyers who seemed not to have recollected this little point, evinced relief at the remembrance, and smiled complacently in return.

The other side continued: "Do you know, sir, of any special means by which you can determine the fact, whether or no any written characters have occupied the face of that paper, or any portion of it, other than those which you now see there?"

"I have tests, sir, by which I can determine the fact, if I may be allowed to try them."

The defence here again warmly interfered. They protested against the whole line of the examination, and declared in particular, that they would not suffer their document to be mutilated or otherwise impaired, merely to satisfy an idle and pertinacious curiosity. The answer to this was, that the test would not injure the paper; and when to this assurance of the chemist, the remark was added by one of the lawyers for the plaintiff, who had just learned that the document had been put on record, that its absolute destruction would only inure to the benefit of those who affected to be so tender of it, the objection was again defeated.

Mr. Andrews then applied his tests, and soon from the murky texture of the paper a few faint vapory lines resolved themselves upon the surface and ran dimly between the bolder context of the bond. They were too faint to be accurately deciphered, but still they were there, and a comparison of them with

some of Mr. Dart's private manuscript showed the same slope and general features of the hand.

"This was the first instant," said one of the distinguished counsel for the defence, in a recent conversation on the subject of this trial; "This was the first instant that I entertained a doubt of the perfect justice of our cause. My absolute confidence in the integrity of my client had blinded me to the significant trifles that had been developed; but of a sudden the truth flashed across my mind, and I was seized with so violent an agitation, that though I rose to reply, I could not command an utterance. While I stood thus perplexed and overcome, the perspiration starting from every pore, I turned towards Edwards, expecting to see him overwhelmed with the dreadful prospect of his fate; but, incredible as it may appear, the man seemed entirely unmoved. The same icy unconcern, the same marble composure, was exhibited in his whole demeanor, and when he turned his eye upon mine, it expanded only with a sort of mild inquiry if I would have any information from him. I have seen firmness and self-possession evinced in an extraordinary degree in the trying vicissitudes of our national fortunes, but I never before saw a prosperous man look so boldly in the face of the gallows.

"Mr. Edwards," said I, leaning close to him and addressing him in an impressive whisper that betrayed the depth of my vexation; "Mr. Edwards, I am forced to believe that your bill of sale is a forgery. It may not be proper for me now to say all that I think; but I find, sir, that I and my associate have been deceived."

"Not by me, sir," replied Edwards, with a warmth that implied that he felt wounded by the imputation. "I am not answerable for the uses the paper on which the bond is drawn may have been prostituted to, before it fell into my hands. So far as its yellow tinge and the rusty appearance of the ink are concerned, I have other papers now about me that present the same appearance, from the same cause." With this expression, he drew from his breast pocket a wallet, and taking out several papers, handed me a promissory note for three thousand dollars and upwards, drawn to his order by one of the first men in Texas, whose signature was as familiar to me as my own. The appearance of the ink and color of the paper of this instrument, being identical with those of the bill of sale, I felt slightly reassured, and losing

sight in my excitement of his quibble as to the renovated characters, I turned to the Court and related the loss of the portmanteau in the Mississippi river. I then confidently presented the note, which I parenthetically presumed no one would dispute to be genuine, as a corroboration of the results which had happened to the bill of sale through the accident. Previous to my making this address, and while my attention had been occupied in the brief conversation with my client, Mr. Andrews had left the stand, and Dr. Stewart had been called and sworn. He, too, scrutinized the bill of sale, and perfectly agreed with Mr. Andrews as to its character. When the note was handed up to the bench, it was passed to him for his inspection.

"'You will observe,' said I, after giving him some minutes for his examination, 'that the note bears in all respects the appearance of the bill of sale.'

"'For the best of reasons, sir,' replied the witness sententiously.

"Well sir, for what?"

"Because it is a fellow of the same character!" replied he. "It is a forgery like the other."

The note was then subjected to the same test as had been applied to the bill of sale, and underneath the writing came out the faint traces of an expired due bill, all of which had been extracted except the signature. The villainy stood revealed. But it was not yet legally established. The signatures of the respectable witnesses to the paper had yet to be accounted for. On the part of the defence, Ashmore Edwards testified to the authentic execution of the bill, and of the plaintiff's personal application to him, in company with his brother, for the signature of himself and Mr. Splane as witnesses to the instrument, as he did to other gentlemen, for another paper.

This threw the whole case again into confusion. The jury, who were forced to take it in this perplexed condition, and with a charge equally obscure, went out, but after the absence of several hours, were unable to agree upon a verdict. Upon their return, they handed the forged paper which they had carried out with them, to the Judge. That dignitary would have returned it to the defendant, but the counsel for the plaintiff who seemed to be on the look out for this movement, quickly interposed and urged that it be consigned to the custody of the court until a new trial could be had. The other side declared against the proposition and insisted on the custody of their

own property, but the counsel for the plaintiff intimated that the paper might not be forthcoming if entrusted to the defendant, and remarked with much point, that their reluctance must be assigned to a guilty apprehension, as the paper being registered, precluded them from any risk by its loss or its destruction.

"The demand is impertinent and insulting," said Ashmore Edwards, in a tone loud enough to be heard throughout the court room, "but if I were my brother, I would yield to it, and after the establishment of its genuineness, seek an adequate revenge."

"We will take a proposition from him on those terms," said the counsel for the plaintiff, sarcastically.

"Well, then, you can have it!" said the forger, adopting an air and tone of bravado as the only creditable alternative he had left. "But mark me, gentlemen, this concession only aggravates the redress which I shall exact from you all, when this business is legally disposed of!"

"You shall find me always at your service, Mr. Edwards!" said the counsel for the plaintiff, to whom the last remark was most specially addressed, with a duelling bow.

The forged bill of sale was deposited with the court, but it remained there only till the following day, at which time it was removed to a criminal jurisdiction and warrants were issued upon it against both the brothers for forgery.

On the same day they were both arrested, and lodged in prison on that capital charge.

CHAPTER X.

Life in Prison—Kitty Clover—The Habeas Corpus—Journey to Antonia—Fresh Dangers—The Escape—The Bag of Gold—The New Witnesses—The Judgment—The Final Flight.

The excitement created in the town of Brazoria by the foregoing case, was at its climax on the arrest of the two brothers. Every mind was startled with surprise at the event, while the more hungry gossips snapped up the conversational godsend, with a relish made the sharper, because of the long preceding famine of political tranquility. The disgrace of the wealthy kinsmen afforded to the newsmongers however, a dish competent to the utmost distention of their stomachs; and the evidence that this worthy class of people did not neglect to make the most of the meal, might be

seen in the inflated importance and wonder rounded eyes with which they detailed the circumstances of the trial to every listener whom they succeeded in taking into oral custody. The strange developements made different impressions upon those who heard them, some still adhering to a notion of the Colonel's innocence; but others, and it must be admitted by far the greatest portion, inclining to credit every scruple of the charge against him. In this conflict between suspicion and reliance, the elder brother, though his position and apparent implication seemed the same, was not wounded by a single solitary shaft of prejudice or popular distrust. This distinction may appear singular, as between two persons thitherto equally untouched by doubt, but it may be accounted for, in favor of the latter, by his career of patient thrift, his simple manners and correct demeanor; while the roving speculations and moral looseness of the Colonel's life, joined to the offensive ostentation of his bearing, left him more at the mercy of illiberal constructions. In addition, the former did not suffer the imputation of any sordid motive as an impellent to the crime, while the latter stood directly within the suspicion of that numerous class of judges who settle a man's guilt by measuring the bulk of his temptations.

The result of this condition of the public mind was, that the elder brother on the day after his arrest, was released on bail, while the same privilege was absolutely denied to Monroe. The ostensible reason given for this distinction was, that while it might be possible that Ashmore Edwards had been deceived out of his signature to the bill of sale by some contrived device, the entire forgery of the body of that document, as well as of the Spanish bond and promissory note, lay against the younger brother. This construction was not strained, for Mr. Pettus, who had witnessed the bill of sale with Ashmore, had arrived in Brazoria through a post haste summons, to exculpate the elder, by affirming to the honest execution of the bond. The counsel for the defendant endeavored to make this evidence work to his release also, but obvious reasons presented themselves to the mind of the committing magistrate to resist the equality of application, and the Colonel, therefore, still remained a prisoner.

Though exasperated almost beyond endurance at the turn which affairs had taken, the prisoner dissembled his rage

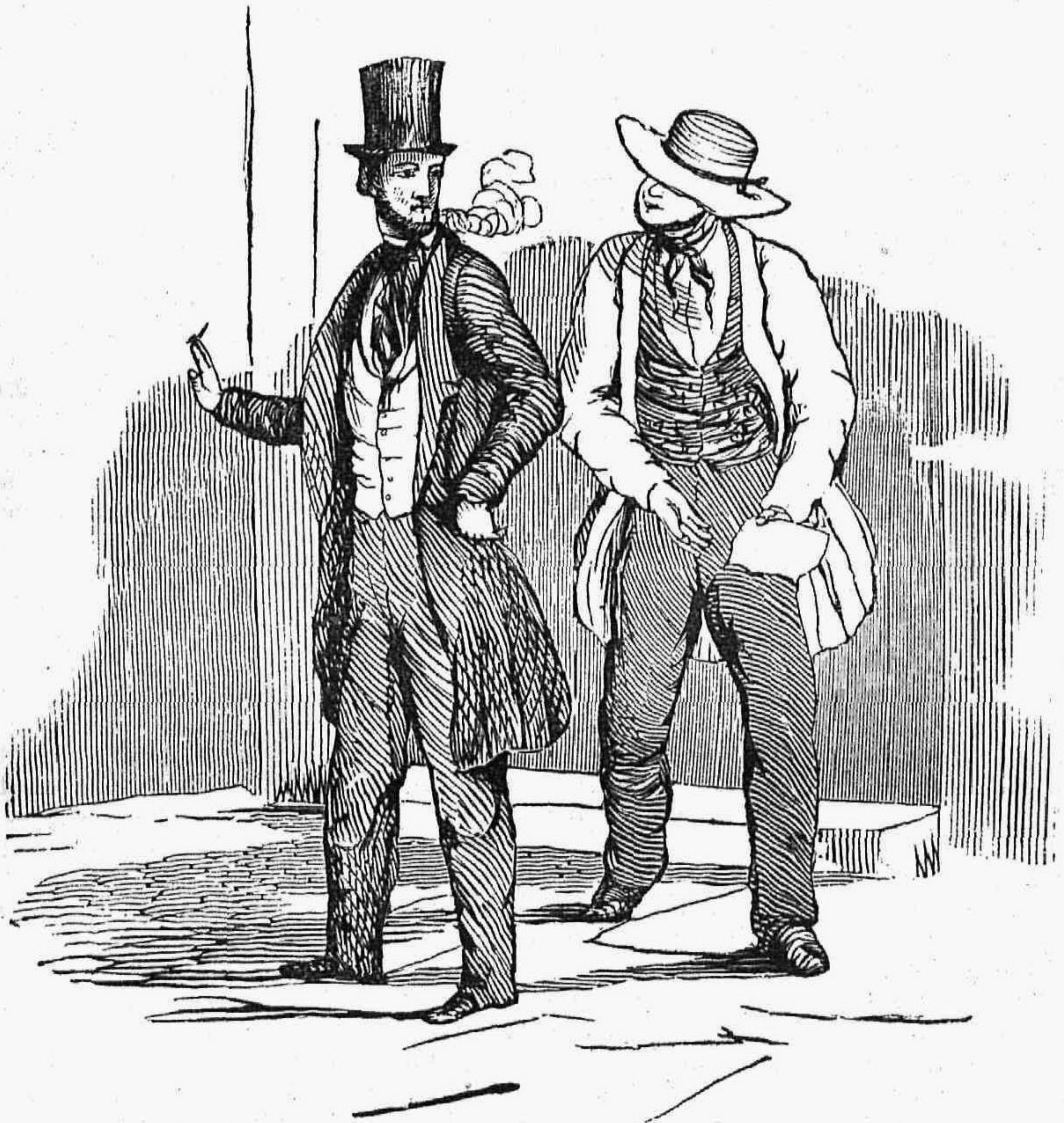
within the metes of an apparent resignation, and with his usual nonchalance, addressed himself to making the best of his condition by surrounding himself with those elegant comforts and foppish delicacies which had become habitual with him through a period of several years. His prison table was covered with elegant articles of vertu; a stock of perfumery that would have started a hair dresser respectably in business ornamented a splendid dressing case in another portion of the narrow room, while all around it, on supernumerary pegs, hung the most favored representatives of a numerous lineage of fashionable trowsers, coats, and vests. He was regularly shaved and powdered with the same care as if he meditated the captivity of a lady; his boots were every morning brushed to a faultless gloze; and his hair and beloved whiskers continued to be as affectionately nurtured and displayed, as if they were intended continuously to wound something more sensible than the mere surface of a looking glass. Thus did his foibles stand sentinel against the inroads of misfortune, and protect the more sensitive portions of his nature from the most stinging thrusts of destiny.

But Kitty Clover was the most potent influence in reducing the list of our prisoner's privations and in softening the rudeness of his confinement. As soon as the misfortune of her beloved master reached the ears of this African Ariadne, she purloined the male attire of one of her youthful fellow-slaves while he was asleep, and filling her pockets, after she had assumed it, with such articles as she knew her master to be most addicted to, set out at midnight to visit him in prison. She reached Brazoria in the morning, and representing herself to be one of the Colonel's boys, was readily admitted by virtue of the disguise, which for years after she did not lay aside. Her master appreciated her devotion to the extreme, and the grateful consciousness gave an additional zest to the comforts and kindnesses which her presence and attentions afforded. As for Kitty, she never was so happy: her master was for the first time in absolute dependance on her for all his comforts, and she shared the full scope of his state on exactly equal terms. The limits of the cell were none too small for her personal desires, and its mean walls were as bright to her illusion, as ever were the walls of Kasrac's palace to the tender Badroulbador.

After our imprisoned hero had remained

in his lachrymose condition for a few days, his indefatigable counsel, finding there was nothing to hope from the judicial authorities in Brazoria, proceeded to Antonia, a small town at some distance in the interior, and obtained a writ of habeas corpus from the judge of the district, to have the prisoner brought before him that he might hear and decide a motion to admit to bail.

The notice of this proceeding, which was given to the opposite counsel according to rule, decided those gentlemen upon a course of action which they had been previously debating. This was a re-commencement of the civil suit, and a fresh attachment of the estate upon the San Bernard. These two measures were promptly accomplished on the very morning of departure for Antonio, and in due



ARREST OF EDWARDS IN TEXAS.

pursuance of the latter, a sheriff's writ was lodged upon the shoulders of the Colonel as an additional clog to his escape, should the motion on the *habeas* prove successful. To render this restraint effectual, the prison-keeper was deputed by the sheriff to bring the forger back, on the *capias*, which was the prologue to the civil proceeding.

Under these discouraging prospects the Colonel set out with his principal

lawyer for Antonio, attended by the boy Henry (who had not been sequestered with the rest of the slaves for want of a male description to suit him,) and fortified with the testimony of Mr. Pettus, Mr. Splane and of his brother, to prove the legitimacy of the execution of the paper by the plaintiff. Throughout the journey Edwards maintained his cheerful humor, and indeed, of all the party, seemed the least occupied with concern for the result.

His gaiety however was sufficiently restrained to remain free from suspicion of bravado; and withal appeared so actual and so unaffected, as to occasion to his lawyer the same surprise he had once before experienced at his client's inflexible composure during the terrible ordeal of the trial.

In due time the two cavalcades of plaintiff and defendant arrived at the place of their joint destination, and after preliminary preparations, entered on the business of the motion. The matter was argued with ability on both sides, but owing to some shrewd arrangements that had been early made by the defence, but which did not mantle on the surface of the case, the prisoner's release from durance was assured, and he was admitted to bail on the complaint; a gentleman named Lucius P. Cook, then acting as Secretary of the Texian navy, becoming his bondsman in the sum of five thousand dollars. This was a vast relief to the Colonel, but yet he was not free. The sheriff's writ still held him by the bridle. But that was not so stern a tether that it might not be easily broken on his return, now that he had snapped the first.

Edwards and his party did not set out on their return to Brazoria immediately upon the adjudication of their case, but decided to remain over a day to recruit themselves, and to take measures for an easy journey back. The beaten prosecution however could not lie still in their chagrin, but mounted at once and departed, with studious brows, as if bent upon some earnest purpose. Edwards was too interested an observer to overlook these passing signs, so in a wise spirit of precaution he induced his lawyer to ask a place for the boy Henry in the plaintiff's train, on pretence that he must send directions back on private business. Having obtained this point, the Colonel directed his faithful messenger to glean what he could of the intentions of the prosecutors, through the slaves who waited on them, but chiefly to charge his brother to be prepared with bail upon the writ, against his arrival in Brazoria; and also if necessity should rise, to warn him by express, if any fresh dangers threatened his return. In view of these advantages the Colonel parted with his convenient servitor, but though the discomfort she endured in consequence, were grievous to his pampered ease, he found them amply balanced by the weight of the result.

The sprig of African royalty departed,

and resolving her entire bulk into ears and eyes alone, slunk along in the refuse of the train, without showing the exercise of either. On the second day, her patient tactics were rewarded by a familiar conversation with the servant of one of the lawyers. Through this man, who waited on his master and his friends at supper, she gathered their intention to issue two new warrants against her master as soon as he returned to Brazoria, and to keep him fast in prison until they led him to the gallows. Her first impulse on learning these dreadful items was to turn back, but she recollected her master's express directions to keep on, until she handed the letter which she carried in her bosom, to his brother Ashmore. Tough work was it for her to bear away, when a revelation so vital to her lover's life seemed to command her back. It was well that she kept on, for the brother had a confirmation to add to her news, which perhaps her obscure report might not have impressed upon the confident forger's mind. The gentleman whose signature to the expired due bill had been made to stand sponsor to the new promissory note, had arrived in Brazoria at the summons of the prosecution.—Joining this circumstance with the information of the girl, Ashmore concluded that the two new warrants were to be for the forgery of the Spanish Bond and the promissory note. This last would be a fatal blow, as the fraud of the due bill could not be controverted by witnesses who had been deceived, as in the case of the bill of sale, but would stand naked and unrelieved against his brother's life. It was plain that his kinsman was a villain, though he could not conjecture how he himself had been deceived; and it was also plain that nothing but instant flight could save him from the gallows. There was no time to be lost; the Colonel was advancing at the distance of only a day's travel upon the heels of the boy who brought the letter, so a rapid dispatch was made up for his advice at once. Most eager of the two, Kitty did not require any injunctions as to speed, but bestriding a horse freshly prepared for her urgent need, she scoured out into the open country, hotly retracing the trail which she had so tardily crept over in the morning.

By dint of hard riding and brief rest, the poor worn out girl reached an inn early in the afternoon of the following day, about forty miles distant from Brazoria. There she resolved to wait her master; so giving her horse in care of a

stable boy of her own color, she crept into the loft above, to snatch a short repose for her spent and wearied frame; taking the precaution, however, before doing so, to bribe the boy to wake her, if any party of gentlemen should arrive.

At nightfall the defendant and his train drew up at the rude hotel, and the black boy, mindful of his hire, roused up our sleepy Oriana just in time for her to look over the rack and behold her master entering the stable door to oversee the treatment of his horse. He entered the stall directly underneath her, but not daring to call because of the neighborhood of his companions, she only ventured a slight cough, and then held down in her dusky arm the letter which she bore for his direction. The Colonel, whose ear was as fine as a musician's, at once detected the signal, and looking up, perceived and snatched the missive in a moment. Thrusting it within the folds of his vest, as he saw one of his party appear at the edge of the stall, he sauntered out, tapping his trowsers with his riding whip, as if in mere listlessness of thought.

Kitty drew a free breath as she saw her master safely possess himself of the letter, and lying down again, calmly waited his return.

In half an hour he reappeared, and alone. "Kitty," said he, softly, as he entered the manger where he received the letter; "Kitty, where are you?" "Here, massa," quickly responded the African girl, stooping her dusky face down the aperture.

"Kitty, I shall be here at midnight, when we must saddle up the two best of these horses, and ride away as fast as we can. Till then you must stay where you are, and, if you feel like it, you can lie down and go to sleep." Saying this he turned quickly on his heel and left the stable.

Weighed down by her extreme fatigue, Kitty did dream for about two hours more, but then the pressing business of the night triumphed over the weakening hold of sleep, and she roused a full hour previous to her need. At length her master came, when unfastening the horses they led them to a safe distance from the house. Then mounting, each astride, they galloped off to the south-east, in the direction of the San Bernard.

When the morning overtook them in their journey; they struck for a close chapparal that ran on their right hand, and there secreted themselves until the shadows fell again; refreshing themselves

meanwhile, with alternate periods of sleep and with the contents of a wallet that the Colonel had prudently brought with him. In the mid hours of the following night they reached their home. The master did not adventure into the mansion at once, but remaining with the horses some distance off, sent Kitty to the lodge of an old negro who had care of the building, and who, he had reason to believe was very much attached to him. The faithful girl brought the old man back without having allowed him to communicate with any person else after she had spoken to him, and had the satisfaction to behold the sincere delight with which he recognized his unfortunate master. The slave was made to comprehend the Colonel's situation, and received direction to first give him secret ingress to the house, and then have the horses which brought them, ridden as far away in an opposite direction as possible, and turned loose.

Devoting an hour or two to ransacking his trunks and clothes for papers, destroying some and carefully pocketing others, the forger proceeded to a place of secret deposit, whence he drew forth a small bag of gold. Separating this and disposing of it as conveniently as possible about his own and Kitty's person, he proceeded to the porter's hut and ordered two of his own horses from the stable. Rewarding the old fellow with a piece of gold, and a still more precious compliment for his fidelity, the ruined planter mounted again with his counterfeit attendant and struck off in a southwesterly direction. The master and his attending shadow laid by in the day time as before, but on the second night, they reached the rude dwelling of one of the early settlers, from whose friendship and old acquaintance, the Colonel knew he could claim a refuge. He was not mistaken; and finding his host of the mettle to stand by him even in the face of all the outraged virtues, he made himself content for the time, and resolved there to take his post to watch perdue the changes of the storm.

He made nothing by the delay. The new suit of Dart, who this time in a spirit of retaliation laid claim to the whole of the estate, went on, and rapidly travelled through the preliminary stages, towards the point of final adjudication. Previous however to the day of trial, two witnesses turned up for the old man to settle matters conclusively in favor of his case. Among those who had sought to reconcile the puzzling contradiction of the witnesses to the bill of sale with

Dart's solemn asservation that no such execution had been made by him, was a clerk in the hotel in Galveston, where Dart had put up on his first and second visits to Texas. This man recollected the strange circumstance of having, about the date of the bill of sale, left Mr. Dart one morning writing in his room, in a loose undress, but that on going directly out was startled to meet him fully attired in his very peculiar walking suit, sauntering arm in arm with Edwards. Returning back at once he had still found Mr. Dart writing where he left him, and in the first negligent attire. Bewildered, he for a while knew not what to think; but at length, for lack of any rational translation, he was obliged to credit the miracle to the illusion of resemblances. He had said but little of the matter at the time, but weighing it now in a truer scale, he guessed at the secret of the double. Swelling with the importance of his hypothesis, he now retailed it on all sides; and the item falling on the ears of the captain of the brig that had brought the old gambler out, the seaman was reminded of his strange passenger, of the peculiar dress he had once seen in his possession, and also of the really wonderful likeness that existed between him and the plaintiff in the suit. The proof by Dart, on the other hand, that he had arrived in another vessel, seemed to establish the fact that there had been a spurious representative of his proper person, brought out to Texas for the deception of the witnesses.

The labyrinth was now unwound, and under the press of all these revelations to add to the disgraceful absence of their client, the counsel for the fugitive were borne down from their defence, and judgment given to the plaintiff. The plaintiff's claims to the entire estate were awarded by the Jury in a spirit of resentment, rather than on any legal proof of title. The forgery had undone the forger of his strength. Without its exposure, Dart never could have shown consideration to oust the possessor of a single rood or a solitary serf, but the vile contrivance rankly confessed the weakness of the cause that required it, and in the absence of the perpetrator to defend the act, it was taken as his admission of his want of substantial title. The villany had worked out its own vengeance on the villain, and in a spirit of inexorable retribution, had turned backward on its master, and taken a forfeiture equal to the measure of the contemplated wrong.

This blow settled all the forger's Tex-

an prospects, and from the lordly planter made him a landless vagabond on the face of the fair region which might have been his Paradise. Swallowing his rage for the digestion of revenge, he bade adieu to the refuge that was now no longer safe to him, and with his inseparable attendant by his side, rode for the Sabine boundary under a close disguise.

CHAPTER XIII.

Arrival in the States—Inception of a great project—New mode of settling a Hotel Account—Manumission of Slaves—Intrigue with the New York Abolitionists—New Forgeries.

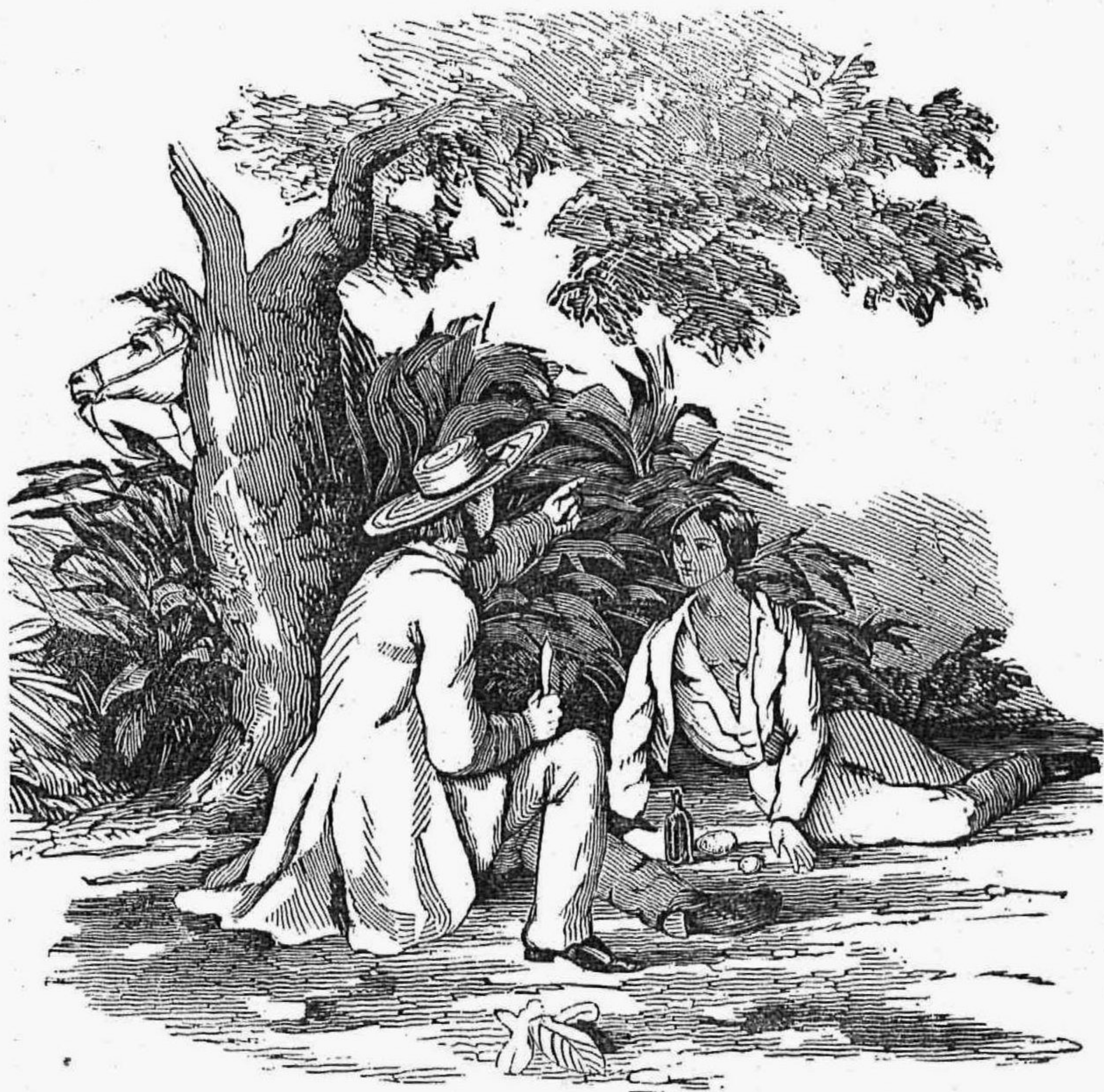
Worn with fatigue, dispirited by misfortune, and soured with general spite for all he left behind, the fugitive arrived in New Orleans. His state was indeed cheerless. Stripped of all his possessions, ruined in all his hopes, bankrupt in that sound respect which lives above mischance, and lays new foundations in the very wrecks of fortune; homeless and friendless, save in the sympathy of that poor menial shadow which still clung at his heels, he yielded to the press of broken hopes and temporarily sunk under his gloomy prospects. His despondency, however, not being tinctured with remorse, did not long to maintain its empire over materials of such buoyancy and strength as composed his mind.

It was rather a disconsolate peevishness for the overthrow of a series of pet calculations, than an incurable despair. Indeed, a profounder sentiment of depression could hardly be expected from a state of thought in which Conscience and her weapons never were admitted.

The lapse of a few days, therefore, saw the forger restored to his composure, and sharpened up again for new adventures. It was necessary, however, that he should calmly survey the whole horoscope of his condition before taking any new idea for the future. He was literally commencing life anew. His first era had closed in the dark cloud which swept him from the face of Texas, an outcast from its soil forever. The second was now in its inception. He bore nothing with him from the tornado which wound up the former but experience and the chastisement of overthrow. It behoved him, therefore, to use this experience wisely and well, that he might avoid the fatal miscalculation that had tripped him up before. But he had too much genius to apply the simple lesson wisely; too much self-reliance and conceit in his own

powers, to construe it well. As is common with bright intellects and daring minds, he attributed his miscarriages to the perversity of accident alone, and not to the inherent flaws of purblind crime, or the inevitable gaps left in its own unsteady track, by feverish ambition. To confirm this illusion to the most precipitous direction, the promptings of revenge stole in upon his counsel, and tempted

him that he must make the settlement of by-gone wrongs conjunctive with all schemes and calculations of advancement for the future. Instead, therefore, of wiping off both sides of the slate at once, and regarding the past only as a dream which had visited him but to leave a rich moral in his ear, he harbored all its prejudices, to infect his calculations for the time to come.



EDWARDS AND KITTY CLOVER DINING IN THE CHAPPARAL.

The fugitive forger was not long in New Orleans before he learned the estimation he left behind him in Texas. It was very bad. From Olympus he had fallen into Styx, and no voice asked extenuation for him. Those who had been his warmest friends withdrew from his defence, and those whose hatred had been coined out of mere neutrality, were rife with regrets that he had escaped the gallows. The outcast contemplated this revolution with a bitter

thought, but he returned the compliment with an interest of hate. He did not, like Timon, vent sour curses on the place he fled, but a keen thought of vengeance glided like a serpent through the cold meshes of his brain, and reared that gigantic design, which, had it been duly carried out, would have blotted Texas from the catalogue of nations.

This would be a revenge worthy of his genius, and commensurate with the sweeping measure of his own ruin. Best

of all, it would flow from his own original act, and be recognised as the appalling consequence of the triumph which had just been obtained over him. To be brief, his plan was to visit England and inform the British Government of the introduction of the free apprentices from Cuba into Texas, in violation of the laws of nations in relation to the slave trade.

The British Government, upon receiving this statement and upon being convinced of its accuracy, would not hesitate, for the sake of its own character, to take measures to restore the captives to liberty, and to punish the offending State. An investigation would establish the truth of the event, and the Colonel would furnish the Premier with hints as to the manner of the release of the slaves when seized in the Brazos river, to implicate the Government in the transaction. The result would be, that the British Government would peremptorily demand the restitution of every one of the kidnapped Africans, and an atonement or apology for the infraction of the league. This requisition, the State of Texas would, from the very nature of the case be unable to fulfil, many of the slaves being distributed throughout the territory in various hands. For such deficit as might not be in the immediate possession of Dart at the time of the demand, the Texan government could not offer a compensation in money, as no sum would be recognised by an apostolic government as the price of human liberty. Moreover, on the other hand, it was more than probable that Texas, with the sauciness of youth and in the spirit of her great descent, would disdain the authority of the Inquisitorial Power, and advise it to keep within the circle of its legitimate supervision. There could be but one issue to such a dispute, and that would be the arbitrament of war. This recourse would be embraced by Britain the more readily, from a certain hankering which she had long felt for the splendid cotton region between the Sabine and the Rio Grande; and the inevitable climax of the forger's revengeful scheme must be, the sequestration of all Texas in the same way his own estate had been sequestered, and the despoilment of Dart of every rood of land, and every slave, as he had been despoiled. This was a revenge in kind; and those to whose great benefit it would inure, could not but mete out to him a rich reward, and perhaps bestow on him the Secretaryship, or other equally important office of the new colonial government. To gild his deserts,

and render his progress more feasible, he determined on a mock manumission of the slaves which now were not his own, by which fetch he calculated not only to atone to the British Government for the nefariousness of his original sin, but make a reputation amongst domestic abolitionists, whose good report should help him with the English minister, and swell the canvass of his scheme.

Having completely settled this stupendous project in his mind, he, like most great geniuses was suddenly aroused from his lofty calculations by the press of present necessities. He was therefore obliged to draw in his faculties from their comprehensive grasp and concentrate them upon the narrower point of his immediate wants. He was established at a comfortable hotel, with a most obliging landlord, but knowing that a mere appreciation of the attentions of his host in the way of gratitude, would not be a compensation for his bill, he seduced the hostess, and through her generosity, obtained sufficient means to preserve the respect of her husband. Having made himself easy on this score, he devoted his leisure for several days to the perpetration of a forgery of nine hundred dollars on one of the banks, which, by the aid of a disguise he presented in person, and got cashed without demur. This sum made him easy again, and increasing his wardrobe to the latest quip of fashion, he found time and inclination to enlarge his amours, and devote himself to other tender speculations. Before he had fairly plumed himself in this libidinous flight however, a slight misadventure befel him in his intercourse with his landlady. In brief, they were grossly discovered, not by the husband, but by a female rival who could not be bribed to silence. In this conjuncture the Colonel found it prudent to decamp without delay, leaving Kitty, in his haste, to follow him with his baggage on the following afternoon. He stopped at Natchez on his way up the river, to see his mother, his sister and his younger brother. To them he related all his Texan persecutions, and succeeded by his plausibility and their credulous affection, in convincing them that he had been the most cruelly wronged of men. Explaining the condition of his finances, they readily spared him a few hundred dollars from the store to which he had large contributed in his prosperity, when bidding them farewell, he left them never to see them more.

He shaped his course to Cincinnati, and there it was that he decided to make

his first play in the great game of the demolition of Texas. Finding acquaintances who had known him in his former visit as a wealthy planter and slaveholder, he experienced no difficulty in getting into good society, or in securing an introduction to the most prominent and influential abolitionists of the place. These latter gentlemen naturally lectured him on the enormity of slavery, and the wickedness of holding man in bondage, whereupon the Colonel affecting to be touched with a sudden contrition, declared his determination to manumit the one hundred and sixty-three slaves whom he had left behind him on his estate. As if he feared his resolution might grow cold, he had the necessary papers drawn at once, including one for Kitty, under the name of "Henry Clover," to give reality to the transaction. The newspapers of the day contained an account of the magnanimous sacrifice, and from one part of the Union to the other, the paragraph ran the gauntlet of wonder and general applause.

Edwards at once became the lion of the city, and being thus made the object of general attention, was no less blessed with the admiration of the ladies, than the approbation of the men.

There were, however, better results attendant upon his huge sacrifice to principle, than mere applause. It enabled him to represent himself in need of present means, and to ascribe his deficiency to the resignation, among the rest, of five or six fine negroes, whom he had intended to dispose of in Kentucky. In this state of things his wants could not be disregarded by those who had advised the righteous sacrifice; and consequently our amateur philanthropist found but small difficulty in raising a loan of near two thousand dollars from his approving counsellors in the cause of freedom.

Flushed with success, and inflated with his spurious renown, the Colonel determined to proceed onward to New-York, and turn his favorable standing to account, before perverse report should overtake his heels and throw a chill upon the mercury of his rising prospects. Efforts were made by several of the abolitionists to induce the interesting yellow-boy to remain with them; but Kitty had wedded her humble fortunes to her master, and refused to leave his service.

It was the latter part of May when Monroe Edwards entered New-York the second time. On this occasion, he took rooms, as before, at the City Hotel, and after a very brief survey of the field, put

himself in communication with Arthur Tappan, the celebrated abolitionist, then doing business in Pearl-street. By Arthur he was introduced to Lewis Tappan, and, through the two brothers, to several other of the most prominent members of the abolition cause. In these interviews Kitty Clover, with her neat blue jacket and well fitting pantaloons, was an object of paramount interest, and many an enthusiastic brother folded her tenderly within his arms, and fondled her upon his knee, without dreaming that she had a double title to such treatment. Our managing hero confined his machinations chiefly to the younger of the above-named gentlemen, as but little observation convinced him that he was the key-stone of the whole confederacy of emancipation. He related to him, in glowing terms, the history of his huge sacrifice to the common cause in Cincinnati, and when he had inspired him with sufficient respect for his good works, he broke the imposing subject of his blow at Texas. It may be readily conceived that a prospect of such flaming ravage in the cause of freedom excited a lively sensation in the imagination of the abolitionist. Indeed, for a time, the project was considered with consuming interest, and the interviews between the swindler and the philanthropist were frequent in proportion. Edwards called at Tappan's store, and Tappan visited him at the City Hotel; and notes passed between them very often. At length the Colonel, thinking that he had devoted as much of his choice attentions upon the merchant as a single individual deserved from a person so distinguished as himself, hinted at a loan to enable him to visit England, and carry out his project.

Now Mr. Tappan, though a very pious man, and possessed of an abundance of that charitable spirit inculcated by the scriptures, had just enough knowledge of the world to skip the doctrine whenever a man sought to obtain money at his hands, or to speculate at his risk. He found, therefore, on examining Mr. Edwards very closely, that his elegant manners and vast pretensions were the mere picket guards and deceptive outposts of a very small reserve of solid character; and when, by persevering surveillance, he further learned that his private habits were dissolute in the extreme, he abandoned his acquaintance, and broke with him altogether. Enraged at the manner in which he had been trifled with and discarded by the man whom he had expected to outgeneral so easy, Edwards wrote

Tappan a long and angry letter, and sent it to his store by the ever-useful Kitty. Tappan, however, took no notice of the angry missive, and though it wound up by demanding a restoration of the writer's previous notes and letters, the abolitionist quietly contented himself with his advantage, and returned no answer.

Finding himself disappointed in being sent out to England as the agent of the Anti-Slavery Society, Edwards devoted himself at once to other calculations and to other efforts. Being determined to pursue his scheme with the British Government in defiance of all discouragements, he set himself to work to obtain such papers of introduction as would be requisite to secure him respectful audience with those on whom he would have to practice his designs. In his previous visit, he had been furnished with credentials from the first men of our country, but these papers he had parted with, and now, through the opposition which he might look for from the Texan ambassador at Washington, who was his personal enemy, he could not expect to be able so to replenish himself again. There was the same resource left him however, to which he had often fell before, and that was to summon the assistance of his counterfeiting skill, and frame what he could not find. He occupied himself therefore for several weeks in obtaining, through a fictitious correspondence set on foot with Daniel Webster, Martin Van Buren, Mr. Forsyth, and other equally distinguished of our public men, their several signatures and styles of writing. Thus provided, it was a matter of little difficulty with him to manufacture spurious letters of introduction in the name of each, and to direct them according to his fancy or to his calculations of policy. In this way he soon possessed himself of counterfeit credentials of the most imposing character, to Lord Brougham, Daniel O'Connell, Earl Spencer, the Marquis of Carmarthen, Duke of Devonshire, &c. &c., all of which might be considered as valuable as genuine, from the inability of these distinguished parties to detect them.

CHAPTER XIV.

A New Associate—An Official Philanthropist—Introduction of Colonel Winfree—His Portrait—Departure for England.

While Edwards was engaged as we have described him at the conclusion of

our last chapter, there arrived in town and put up at his hotel, a young fellow whom he had met with on several occasions in New Orleans, but whose intimacy he had never cultivated, owing to a certain doubtful odour that hung about his reputation for integrity. This man's name was Powell. He was of fine person and agreeable manners, and at a distance would pass exceedingly well for a gentleman. A nice observer, however, could easily detect in him those flaws of vulgar grain which mere earthen ware may never be refined above. These betrayed themselves in various ways; partly in a flashiness of dress; partly in that forward, ostentatious bearing which confesses the absence of true qualities; and partly by a pertness of protestation and a round emphasis when in oath, which revealed that he had been used to convince coarse ears or doubting minds. Nevertheless Mr. Powell was a man of undoubted figure, and calculated to be vendible among chance critics, at something between a well-dressed gambler and a member of Congress.

Edwards was at no loss to weigh Powell for his worth, but though there had been a time when he would have scrupled to admit to his intimacy any character intermediate between the two above questionable limits, his recent moral retrogressions had rendered him less nice and enabled him to judge tolerantly, by bringing him nearly to their level. Besides, Powell had a very dashing off-hand tact in personal intercourse, and also an omnipotent impudence that promised to be serviceable upon occasion. The Colonel, therefore, received his advances with favor, and at length admitted him to a share of his confidence. To this man Edwards explained his English project, and offered a share of its advantages. But Powell, who had other and grosser schemes in view, declined. He nevertheless proffered all the aid that he could render to the forger's wishes, and by virtue of his relationship to a distinguished Senator of the State of Massachusetts, made his word good, by putting him in possession of several letters of prominent statesmen, which proved of signal service in making up the budget of his foreign credentials. From this time Edwards and Powell were constant companions and during the course of the summer they became thoroughly acquainted with each other's characters and designs. They passed the season together, visiting Saratoga and Lake George, figuring prominently among the

fashionables at these popular resorts and returning in September to resume their taste of the more pungent luxuries of the metropolis. It was during this latter period that our hero began to take serious thought upon his waste of time, and to repine the frivolous consumption of his funds; but just at the moment when he had resolved to devote himself to the business of getting to the other side of the Atlantic, he was arrested on a civil process under the Stillwell act against non-resident debtors, for a debt which he had contracted during his last stay in New Orleans. He was taken into custody by an ex-police officer, then acting as a special deputy to the Sheriff. This worthy gentleman would have confined our hero in the debtor's prison had it not been for the earnest intercession of Powell and several southern gentlemen who had known Edwards for some time, and believed him to be a man of undoubted wealth and character. These deluded persons seemed to be unable to endure the idea, that a gentleman like Colonel Edwards, should be locked up in a common prison, with those who were really poor, for a paltry debt which he could easily pay out of hand, and which it was only a point of honor with him to deny. Impressing this view of the case upon the officer, and inducing him to believe at the same time that the matter would be settled in a very few days by the procuration of resident bondsmen at least, they obtained his consent that the prisoner and his negro boy should take temporary lodgings at his house.

While at the residence of his custodian, the Colonel held a continual levee, and with his luxurious toilet service and the attention of the faithful negro boy, lived more in the state of a prince, than in that of a culprit or a prisoner. He received his calls in an elegant negligé; his hair-dresser waited upon him with the assiduous regularity due to men of importance; and the faithful Kitty ever watchful of his minor wants, slept in his chamber to answer the slightest demands of his caprice. In this style and state a week rolled round, the hopes of the officer distending from day to day, in calculations of a princely recompense. At the end of the week, however, the prisoner obtained bondsmen and the golden vision vanished from the sheriff's eyes, taking its departure like the explosive down, without leaving even so much as the slightest residuum, nay discoloration, in his palm. This was a scurvy recompense for such philanthropy as he

had displayed, and he soon came to think that his recent guest was little better than the poor devils whose poverty had never made pretensions to any hope of favor or indulgence whatsoever. He now stood resolved on one point, which was, that he would never put his good nature into the yoke again to do a man a service, without earnest down, and in the first blush of his vexation, he almost received that the whole world was little better than a pack of rogues.

It is thus that one ungrateful rascal strews the road of humanity with thorns for every unfortunate who follows on; and it is for this reason that every knave deserves to be hunted and punished as a common enemy of mankind.

His arrest and the reflections, it suggested, roused the Colonel afresh to the importance of consummating his original intentions, and he began to cast about for the means to take the necessary preliminary steps in the business. He had now but two or three hundred dollars left, which was much too small to adventure in a field where he had once figured as a nabob, and where he must re-show himself in corresponding style. Money therefore he must have. He did not want to try forgery again, at any rate not just then, or in that region; besides, he was decidedly too well known through his prominence upon the promenade, to venture to present a false paper at any of the banks; and save Powell, who suffered under the same disability, there was no person whom he dared to ask to do it for him. The want of such a hand at this moment suggested to him the necessity of securing an assistant to accompany him to Europe, to be used in like emergency if the failure of his great scheme should drive him to some desperate recourse.

While pondering on this subject one afternoon, he raised his head towards Powell who sat smoking at the hotel window and inquired after a man whom he had observed that person hold a conversation with on two or three occasions, in a gaming house to which they now and then made a visit.

The individual thus alluded to was a man about twenty-eight years of age, of a dark complexion and slightly below the middle size. He was nevertheless well formed, and had it not been for an insuperably vile expression of countenance, might have passed for a good looking man. As it was, these letters do not spell "cut purse" more legibly than the combinations of his facial index indica-

ted "miscreant." Still he was not repulsive, for his features were regular and in harmonious relation with each other; yet there was about his face that cold and fixed depravity which one sometimes sees in dreams, when human countenances too fraught with evil for a human shape, change for the relief of the overburdened sense, to that of a wolf or some other beast of prey. This fellow was a *Colonel* too forsooth; but as he had assumed the title only to give him dignity in brothels and render him an acceptable buffoon in drinking houses, the title did not hold its virtue beyond that low and miserable range. He was a native of Richmond, Virginia, but having committed several thefts shortly after attaining his majority, he was obliged to fly the place. He directed his footsteps to New York, where he cast himself upon the charity of an uncle, a good natured and indulgent man, who kept an extensive gaming house in Broadway, and who, (having no children) was well disposed to shelter him. But the reprobate soon managed to disgust his kinsman by his beastly vices, and to wear his patience out by repeated pilferings of his house. Being for this turned out of doors, he formed an alliance of convenience with a low woman of the town, which entitled him to stale caresses and shelter during the butt ends of ill spent nights, and a few shillings in the morning for pocket money and for meals. On this basis he sallied out, and like all of his class hung round the gaming houses during the day, claiming the title of "gambler" to cover the unutterable infamy of his real position. Wretches of this class are known by the significant title of "sweaters," and is needless to say that they are a serious scandal to the more reputable fraternity to whose order they assume to belong.

The Colonel, of whom we now speak had been subjected to many vicissitudes of bed and board while engaged in his base service, having been discarded in rapid succession by several of his frail associates for various delinquencies and peccadilloes, some of the worst of which may be instanced as the theft of jewelry and small mantle ornaments, from the chambers where he slept. This mode of petty plunder was considered excusable however, in the liberal decalogue of a "sweater," and the brothel "Colonel," would show no scruple after he had been detected, in making mirth and merit of these mean exploits, in the circle of second-hand gamblers and watch-stuffers, who were his chosen confreres.

He had served Powell by acting as his dog in a conspiracy by which a worthy girl had been abused, and that excellent gentleman now felt disposed to reward as well as to get rid of him. When, therefore, Edwards inquired who he was with such a serious brow, it struck Powell instantly that his friend was pondering on the subject of an agent. He knew the degraded Virginian's character exactly, but in his new thought, it did not suit him to explain it. Contenting himself therefore, with the conviction that he recommended one sufficiently unscrupulous for any desperate business, he carelessly replied to the forger's interrogations—

"Do you mean that dark complexioned young man in the frock coat who called me aside last night when I first went in?"

"Yes"

"Oh, that's Colonel Winfree."

"Colonel?" ejaculated Edwards with surprise.

"Yes," replied Powell "he's a Virginian of excellent family, whose wildnesses have thrown him on the world, as ours have us. I do not know exactly how far he deserves the title of Colonel, but it is much easier to believe it due to him, than to look up proof against it."

"I can appreciate the force of that reasoning;" replied Edwards with a smile, "enjoying as I do, the advantages of the proposition myself; but Colonel or no Colonel, this Winfree looks like a man who would'nt feel disposed to say his prayers, or to do good for conscience sake, till the afternoon of the last day."

"I'm told he is staunch and reliable in any enterprise he undertakes," said Powell.

"In any villany I dare be sworn he is;" answered the Texan. "But what does he follow?"

"He is a gambler."

"A—h!" exclaimed the Colonel drawing the expression very long as he dwelt upon the thought that an associate well skilled in cards might serve to supply all the necessary current funds, and furnish the ballast to keep the craft of his enterprise in sailing trim. "A—h; a gambler eh?"

"Yes, and a very good one too, I understand."

Powell had indeed understood so, but he had been deceived. Winfree was a mere counterfeit sharp, with no acquirements save a few slipjack smartnesses which might have been taught him by his mistresses upon the counterpane. No

skill that could cozen a countryman or compass the triumph of a bottle of wine out of ringletted gamesters, was his. He was simply a very resolved blackguard, born with a natural relish for rascality, and recognising as his only doctrine, a religious desire to live at the world's expense. The only quality he may be said to have possessed was a knack of passing himself off for much more than he was worth; but the merit of even this is considerably lessened when we consider that he could not have represented himself at less.

"Is he discreet?" again inquired Edwards, after another pause.

"Above all danger," answered Powell.

"You must introduce him to me," returned Edwards, after another pause.

"Short work for that," exclaimed Powell, leaning towards the window, "for here Colonel Winfree comes, promenading down the street in *propria persona*." Rising, as he finished this remark, Powell went out on the steps of the hotel to ask the hero of our explanation in.

In a few minutes the two Colonels were introduced, and during their first confrontation, as well as at intervals throughout their chat, they studied each other with the vigilance of soothsayers. At their separation both were mutually pleased with each other; Winfree being dazzled with the superiority of his new acquaintance, and Edwards, whose ruling foible was conceit, being tickled by the former's servile respect. The Texan, however, made a tolerable estimate of the Virginian's qualities. He could not divine the infamies of his previous career it was true, but he rightly judged that he was not the man to baulk any scheme with modesty or conscience, and he flattered himself that with a little severe training, he might be cultivated into something like a gentleman.

We shall not pause to describe the gradual progress of their intimacy. Suffice it, that the two rogues soon understood each other perfectly, and that it was duly agreed that Winfree should be the travelling companion of our hero, and the partner of his plans. The relationship of the arrangement we have heretofore premised, and it is but necessary now to add, that the *quasi* gambler contributed nothing to the partnership but his gaming requisites; while the Texan was expected to furnish all the actual means. Sooth to say, he was not the man to make a promise to the ear, and break it to the hope. With his usual fertility of resource he devised a means

to hoodwink the avarice of a Wall street broker, and to obtain from him an amount of fifteen hundred dollars, on a mass of Texan scrip, to which he had about as much title as the Great Cham.

Thus provided, the two adventurers, after having supplied themselves with ample stores of clothing, and several very stylish trunks, set out for Boston, and on the 1st of November, 1840, sailed from that port for England, in the British steamer.

CHAPTER XV.

Retrospection—Life in London—Introduction to Parliament—The nobleman's Watch—Interview with Lord Palmerston, the Duke of Wellington, &c—Winfree meets with an old female acquaintance—Her history.

We omitted to give credit in the course of the foregoing chapter to a movement of our hero, which is deserving of being recorded among the several operations of his game. This oversight may be attributed somewhat to our duty to the villain Winfree, the description of whose tortuous qualities twisted our observation from the direct current of the narrative.

It will be remembered what pains the Texian Colonel took to ingratiate himself in the favor of the abolitionists of New-York, and it will likewise be remembered that the bases on which he sought to build and to hold their permanent sympathy and respect, were the sacrifice of his slaves in the first place, and his determination to undo Texas for her violation of the laws of nations, in the next.

He had arrived in New-York full blown with the credit of the manumission. No one had doubted his philanthropy or questioned his devotedness to the cause of emancipation. In the course of time, however, it became known that the slaves for whose release he had been so loudly lauded, were still laboring in the cotton fields of Texas. Moreover, the officious curiosity of Mr. Tappan had discovered that they were not only yet in Texas, but that the title of the Colonel only rested in the basis of his own protest, in opposition to the decision of the courts.

The reception of this news he had frankly communicated to Edwards, who thereupon entered into an elaborate defence of his rights of ownership, adroitly turning the issue, however, on the exciting position that the whole affair was in derogation of public law, and that the only true question for their consideration now was,

what course to take to redress the original wrong.

By this management he had shot the sharp scrutiny of his personal assumptions, and engrossed all inferior questions in the absorbing consideration of the great national iniquity that had been committed. The abolitionist was shrewd enough to detect this manœuvre, but owing to the great interests at stake, he concealed his impressions and held fast to the Colonel, though rather as a necessary witness than an honorable coadjutor. Things were in this condition when Edwards began to intimate the policy of his own employment as a delegate to London of the Anti-Slavery Society, with an outfit and sufficient loan to enable him to appear to advantage among the distinguished diplomatists with whom he would be expected to have familiar intercourse in the performance of his mission. It was at this point of the game, as we have before indicated, that the abolitionist stood entirely disenthralled of the illusions which the plausible swindler had conjured up to hoodwink his fanaticism; but while he evaded a direct recognition of the forger's hints, he shrewdly suggested that all the trouble and expense of the jaunt to England might be spared, by a plain letter to the President of Texas, acquainting him of their intentions with the British government, and declaring that unless his right to the manumitted Africans were recognized, and the poor creatures delivered up to an agent of the Anti-Slavery Society, the case would be laid before the English minister forthwith.

It was not easy to evade a proposal so plausible as this; accordingly the forger drew a letter to President Houston taking the above position, and inclosing the threat, that unless the points which it involved were yielded to him, a difficulty between the governments of Texas and Great Britain might be regarded as inevitable. This letter was despatched by the forger rather in concession to circumstances, and to humor the caprice of one whom he designed to use, than in hope of any direct result. He calculated that it would strengthen his position with the abolitionists, and entitle him to urge with more boldness the ultimate measures he might recommend to them to bring the stubborn and iniquitous government to a sense of justice. We have seen, however, that his calculations were disappointed, and now, to mend the gap in our story, we have but to add that the insolent document which the forger de-

spatched to the Texan Executive, was handed, with contempt, to the "Telegraph" of Galveston, and there, together with the character of its fugitive writer, fully exposed.

We left the hopeful and adventurous Colonel on his ocean way to London, out of patience with a hemisphere which had ostracised his great abilities, and very particularly disgusted with a set of pseudo-philanthropists, whose fanatic fervor was of so mean a tone, as to have rejected the chances of a glorious ravage and conflagration, for the paltry risk of a few thousand dollars.

Arrived in London he took a suite of rooms at Long's Hotel, in Bond street, for himself and his jackal confederate.— There they gave out that they were Colonels, one in the Texan, and the other in the United States army, a rank which not only bespoke respectful consideration from all grades of society, but was likewise a perfect guarantee against suspicion or detraction. Their next step was to attire themselves in the height of fashion and to surround themselves with all those parlor fineries, in addition to regular elegancies of the hotel, which should mark the requirements of luxurious breeding, as well as the refined delicacy of cultivated taste.

Being at length suited to his mind in these preliminary arrangements, the Texan took from his trunk a forged letter to Lord Palmerston, the Secretary for foreign affairs, and drawing on his yellow kids and nodding to Winfree to await his return, he set out to deliver it in person. On his arriving at the Foreign Office he was informed by one of the chief clerks of the department, to whom he explained that he brought a letter of introduction from the Hon. Daniel Webster to his lordship, that it would be most proper for him first to submit his credentials to the Texan minister, and then to seek for an introduction through him. "His lordship would doubtless be most happy to waive this formality in your case, sir," added the gentleman, with a most courtier-like inflection of his body, "but you will see that such a rule is necessary to prevent him from improper intrusions, as it would be impossible for his chamberlain to decide what letter was of weight, and what was not."

"Just so, sir," said the Colonel, bowing slightly back; "and I perceive that the difficulty must be greatest, in the case of persons coming from so wild a region as my own."

"Oh, no, sir; I beg your pardon, sir;

I am not prepared to say any such thing as that, sir," replied the clerk, with a succession of inflections. "Indeed, the sentiments of his lordship would not bear me out in any such opinion. He is a great admirer of Texas."

"Texas will prove herself worthy of his good opinion before long," replied Edwards. "But good day, sir, I am obliged to you for your politeness, and will profit by your suggestion!" saying which, he retired to the door, and took leave with a bow of chaste and graceful dignity.

Edwards found himself in a dilemma at this unexpected condition of affairs. He could not expect favor from General Hamilton, the Texan minister, for that dignitary had doubtless been made acquainted with the threatening letter to the President of Texas. He had no credentials of introduction ready for the United States minister, and even if he should provide them, he could not expect Mr. Stevenson to perform a service due only to his own countrymen, for one whose own nation had a resident minister to do it for him. He might indeed, presume to ask the favor from Mr. Stevenson, by alledging a personal feud between General Hamilton and himself; but when he reflected that this course would be likely to prompt the minister to a dangerous inquiry, he concluded to abandon the idea. A better thought suggested itself to his mind, which was to explain by letter to Lord Palmerston, that his business was of a kind that must be kept a profound secret from the two embassies. There seemed no doubt but he could obtain an interview with the Lord Secretary, by this surreptitious means.

In the meantime he prepared a letter to Mr. Stevenson, over the forged signature of Mr. Forsyth, in favor of both himself and Colonel Winfree, and waited upon that dignitary at his residence. They were received by the minister with that dignified affability for which he was distinguished, and proffered all the courtesies which their unexceptionable credentials seemed to entitle them. Being neither of them afflicted with any painful sense of modesty, they readily became indebted to him for an introduction to the floor of parliament, and while there and in his company, took occasion to present their remaining letters to Earl Spencer, the Duke of Wellington, Daniel O'Connell, and Lord Brougham, whom they found in either house.

During their visit to the Lords, Win-

free, who instinctively embraced every chance to examine the obscurer purlieus of a building, asked one of the servitors, who was running to and fro, the road to the "cabinets indores." The man showed him to the yard, when, on entering an apartment just vacated by a noble earl, the delighted Colonel discovered a magnificent jewelled watch, which the nobleman had left behind him. Seizing the prize he thrust it in his clothes, and as soon as it seemed prudent, returned to the member's hall. Drawing Edwards aside, he communicated what he considered their good fortune, and advised that they should retire at once and make sure of their prize. Edwards, however, evinced the utmost disgust at the mean idea, and scourging the pilferer with his eye, directed him to go at once to the nobleman and restore to him his property. Winfree reluctantly obeyed, but with the assistance of his native impudence, managed to perform the unpalatable courtesy with considerable grace. The nobleman was profuse in his thanks, and the result of the little incident was an exchange of cards, and a meeting that evening at Mivart's.

Edwards did not now require the aid of either minister for an introduction to Lord Palmerston. He secured the favor for the asking, from one of his noble acquaintances, and when he obtained the interview, made the most of his time and of his words. The Lord Secretary was struck with the Texan's communication; and though his diplomatic habits withheld from him anything like a direct indication of his opinions, the forger could see that his information was gravely entertained. The face of his lordship, as he pondered on the subject, seemed like that of a man who might be balancing the hemispheres in either hand, and Edwards thought that he could observe a glow of exultation through all his fixedness of feature, as he contemplated the means by which he might reach what he had so long wished to grasp. He asked of the Texan many questions, pressing him again and again on the slightest particulars of the transshipment of the apprentices, and making memorandums of everything that he considered vital to the case. Having at length possessed himself of the entire scope of the story, he discharged the Colonel with the promise that he would lay the matter before the Privy Council, and send for him, when he desired to see him again, in relation to the matter.

Edwards soon ascertained that the

Privy Council were not likely to meet in several days, and having leisure thus afforded him, he accepted an invitation that had been pressed by a wealthy baron, to spend a few days with him at his residence in the neighbourhood of Manchester. Accordingly he embraced the interim, flattering himself with confident calculations that his gambling associate would now be sure to recruit out of their friend the baron, the vast deficiencies which their recent heavy expenditures had occasioned in their flimsy purse. In this, however, as in every thing else in relation to Winfree, the Colonel was doomed to be deceived. Several games of cards were had with their host, but instead of the vaunting gambler coming off conqueror in these encounters, he was unhorsed in the majority of them, and deepened the vacuum in their already gasping purse, by the further subtraction of £120. This was sufficiently mortifying to Edwards if nothing worse had taken place, but the miserable braggart managed to get drunk at every opportunity, when his foul qualities being stirred to the surface, emitted the odour of the adage. The mortified Texan, disgusted with him in every sense, abruptly shortened his stay and hurried back to London with the firm resolution not to be compromised any further with the fellow's vulgarities. From this time and during the remainder of their stay, Winfree, being allowed to follow his own bent, spent most of his time about the taverns in the neighborhood of the theatres, giving Edwards no cause of uneasiness, except when he appeared at the hotel.

Finding that he had not been sent for by the Foreign Secretary during his absence, Edwards, who was now stimulated afresh by the desperate condition of his finances, determined to make a call upon the Duke of Wellington, and by laying open his business to that distinguished nobleman, endeavor to secure his influence for his plans. He saw the Duke, but did not gain his object. The old nobleman listened quietly to his entire relation, but after a pause of some moments at its conclusion, advised him to trust entirely to the judgment of the lord secretary, who, he quietly remarked, would doubtless send for him in a few days. With this unsatisfactory dismissal, Edwards retired. He next directed his thoughts to the task of engaging the attention of Sir Robert Peel, but in view of the difficulties of procuring such an interview with the Premier, as would enable

him to lay open his business in full, he devoted himself to the preparation of a memorial for that purpose. In two days he accomplished this task, and subscribed it with a request that the memorialist might be sent for on the subject. But Sir Robert declined the application, and sent the paper back with much the same reply as that which had been given by the Duke of Wellington.

While these bold and ingenious manoeuvres were being performed by the Texan hero, the brothel colonel was achieving minor exploits, in a small range, which was equally suited to his habits and capacity. In moving about among the stews of the metropolis, he had fallen in with an old acquaintance in the person of a courtesan, who had figured rather notoriously for several years in New-York, and somewhat discredibly too, (if imprisonment for stealing may be so considered) for the last several months in England. This woman's name was Mary Moore, and Winfree owned her acquaintance from having harbored under the same roof with her in New-York for a long time. He had also gained her friendship, during that period, by having performed several errands between her and a certain fashionable cipher, who had become intoxicated on the lees of her stale favors, till he so forgot his small wit that he went about whimpering alternately at her ill treatment, now blowing her praises in every bar-room, and anon offering to lay wagers on her fidelity. But this snivelling par amour had been discarded by our female utilitarian as soon as his patrimony gave out, and a new and more promising lover taken up, in the person of a mercantile clerk, who had large sums of money entrusted to his care. The result of the clerk's amour may be guessed, but as we wish to leave nothing to the imagination of the reader, it is our duty to state that having cleared him of his ready cash, the courtesan persuaded him to plunder his employers by a wholesale theft, and go with her to England. He followed her advice, and seizing an amount of seven thousand dollars, they set sail together for London. But an officer was sent after them, and Mary and the clerk were ruthlessly seized while taking breakfast one morning at the "Queen's Arms," in Guernsey, stripped of their plunder, and marched off after a summary adjudication, to the House of Correction. She had been out but a few weeks, at the time of the above rencontre with the Virginian. The tread-



EDWARDS INTRODUCED TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

mill, however, had not impaired Mary's personal attractions, and when her old acquaintance met her, he could not refrain from an exclamation of surprise at her robust health and improved appearance.

There is a gratification in the meeting of old acquaintances in a strange country, which levels all distinctions. It was not strange therefore that Mary should forget her superiority in the first joy of greeting an old face, and admit her sometime errand bearer to the familiar privileges of an equal. Women are liable to such weaknesses, and it is for such characters as Winfree to profit by them.—These two worthy personages after having reduced the edge of a long separation to moderate endurance, compared their several adventures for the previous year. Mary retailing what we have above related, and Winfree explaining his connection with the forger.

The romantic courtesan was struck with the picture drawn of the Texan hero, whereupon Winfree, who had an implicit reliance on Edward's talent for supplying himself with money at all times, suggested an introduction between them, and proposed farther, that if she could succeed in hooking his patron, the profits of the arrangement should be shared.—This proposal to debase and plunder his friend, occasioned no shock to our female philosopher's morality, and the scheme was at once ratified in a manner common to such contracting parties. It remains for us but to say, that the small conspirators were successful in their intrigue, and that Edward's, who had sought in vain for the Lady of the Opera, since his arrival in London, resigned himself to the blandishments of this very experienced journeywoman, and installed her in lodgings of considerable elegance.

CHAPTER XVI.

Invitation to Dinner—The two Ministers—Unwelcome Notes—The Last Card—Failure and Retreat.

Having added to his expenditures by the attachment to his establishment of the wasteful demirep whom we mentioned in the last chapter, it more than ever behoved our misguided hero to put in requisition all his mental resources for the replenishment of his purse. It had become so low however, that no dilatory measures of finesse would serve his turn, and he therefore, much against his will, was obliged to make a direct loan from a young nobleman, to the extent of a

hundred and fifty pounds. It happened that on the very day of this transaction, he met the American Minister in the street, who after a short conversation, invited him to take dinner with him on the following afternoon. Edwards of course embraced the invitation with the utmost willingness, but when desired to bring his friend along, he prudently waived the privilege, by regretting that the gentleman referred to would be deprived the honor, by being obliged to leave town on business early the next morning.

The minister and the adventurer then separated; the former to the palace, for it was a levee day, and the latter to his hotel, reflecting actively how he should turn the courtesy of the diplomatist to the best account.

The American Minister on entering the throne room, was accosted by a salutation from the Texan Ambassador. Having left our hero almost at the door of the palace he naturally still had him in his mind; so after having discharged himself of the bow reciprocal to the Texan legate, he spoke of the arrival of Edwards in London, and bestowed many flattering remarks upon that person's gentlemanly qualities. When Mr. Stevenson had finished, General Hamilton coolly informed him that he had been egregiously imposed upon by one of the most notorious swindlers in existence; that Colonel Edwards was no Colonel at all, but a fugitive from justice from his own country, where his life stood forfeit to a most heinous forgery. "As for his companion," added the General, "he is doubtless some vagabond of the same stamp, who has assumed a similar title, for a conjunctively mischievous purpose."

"You astonish me," replied the American Ambassador, evincing the utmost agitation as he recalled the courtesies that he stood implicated with, to the two strangers, "but may you not be mistaken General?—the credentials of these persons were unexceptionable—"

"Upon their face, doubtless;" replied the General, "but either stolen and adapted, or manufactured entirely. They cannot, any of them, be genuine, for I have information that the character of Edwards was fully exposed at Washington by the resident minister there, under directions from the Texan Government, which must have been acted on previous to their date.

"Well but what gives him this consequence, and what does he here?" inquired Mr. Stevenson, with an expression that seemed as if he suspected there was

more in the affair than appeared upon the surface.

"Step aside into the ante-chamber and I will explain;" replied General Hamilton, now became as much interested to disclose his information as the American diplomatist was to receive it. The two ministers upon this withdrew to a recess, when the Texan unfolded the whole story of Edwards exploits, and developed in particular the intended scheme to embroil the British Government with his own, on the slave question.

"Ah!" said the American sharply, as if a sudden light had broken in upon him, "this explains the Secretary's inquiries of late, as to the mode by which you supplied yourselves with slaves in a region so lately free, in the face of the restraints of public law. I see that the adventurer has already been to work. But how comes it General that you did not anticipate him with the Foreign Secretary?"

"A second thought will show you that it was neither requisite nor proper I should give so much importance in advance, to a vagabond of this character. It is enough for me to spurn him out of the way when he becomes actively offensive."

It is more than likely that Mr. Stevenson regarded this reply as an ingenious diplomatic evasion to cover the much stronger reason of not wishing to put the English Government on a troublesome scent; but whether he thought so or not, he certainly did not say so, but merely contented himself after a brief pause with remarking—

"Why, I have invited this man to dine with me to-morrow, and when I first accosted you, just now, it was my intention to request you to make one at the table."

"I should have been obliged to decline, out of consideration for the decorum of your residence, if for nothing else;" replied General Hamilton, "for if I had met this counterfeit Colonel there, I should have been forced to have kicked him into the street. I beg to be excused for making this assumption, but I am persuaded you would have waived the derogation of your roof, on my subsequent justification."

"Well, we will not decide upon that latitude of etiquette suppositively," answered Mr. Stevenson with a smile at the General's warmth; "suffice it, that the necessity of such a question between us is obviated, in fact. I will dispose of

this Colonel now, myself, and without much difficulty."

"Leave him to me," said the Texan Minister; "I will answer for it that you will not find him at your house to-morrow."

"The business requires some action from us both," answered Mr. Stevenson evasively; "but, not to trouble ourselves any further in relation to the fellow, I trust I shall not be disappointed in the pleasure of your company at dinner, to-morrow."

The General bowed in acquiescence. A group of noblemen advancing towards them at that moment, the conversation was brought to a conclusion, and the ceremonies and duties of the day soon floated the two ministers off on different court currents.

In the evening of the same day, Colonel Monroe Edwards received a note from General Hamilton. The missive was not very welcome as it informed him he had been exposed, to the American Minister, by the writer, as a forger and a vagabond; and it was rendered still less palatable from the additional assurance, that if he presumed to present himself at that dignitary's door on the following day, he might calculate on no other refreshment than a sound kicking.

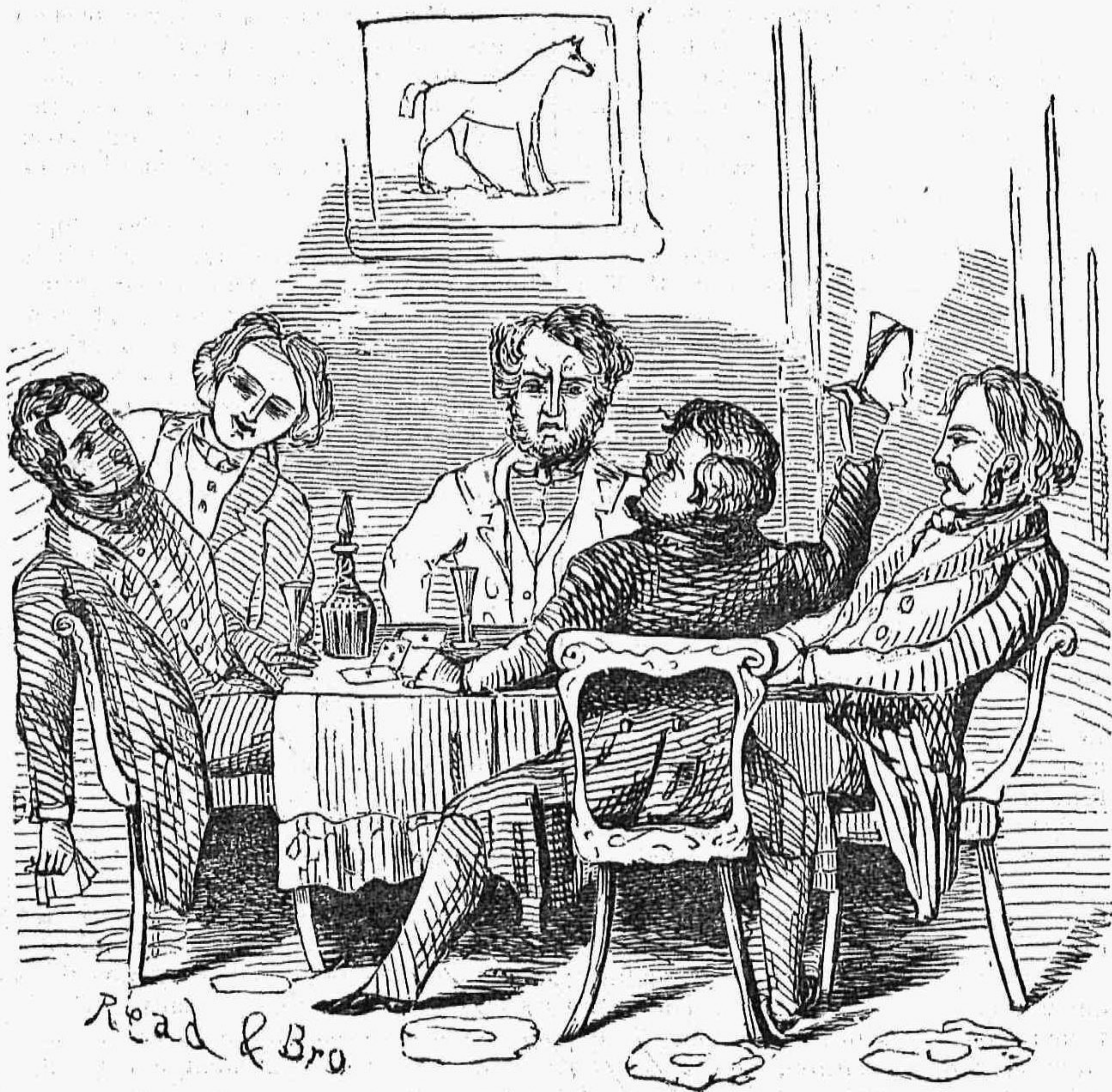
This was deeply mortifying to our friend the Colonel; nay had he not been a philosopher, it doubtless would have killed him with chagrin. But he had not lived in the world thirty years not to know the folly of giving our enemies the satisfaction of putting us quite out of their way; or to be ignorant also of the great fact, that a kicking may be avoided by giving a wide berth to every hostile boot. He resolved not to go to the Ambassador's to dinner, but determined that he would play with all his might against the General. "He may have the best of me in ostensible rencontre," said the Colonel to himself, "but I will wrestle with him in management, and if all fortune does not desert me, it shall go hard but I will give him some pretty heavy falls."

This was rather cold reasoning for a Colonel who had been threatened with a kicking, but due allowances must be made for the consciousness that his conduct had given an absolute invitation to that sort of discipline, and it likewise must be borne in mind that he had sufficient intellect to justify him in being a coward—a retaliation of nature not uncommon to men of genius; probably to

offset their superior facility in representing themselves as heroes. *

While the Colonel was cogitating as to the best means to take to blunt the edge of the Texan Ambassador's reproach, a second note was handed him by Kitty. Tearing it open, his worst fears were realized. It was from the American Minister, acquainting him that the invitation given to him in the morning was revoked, and adding coldly that the presence of *Mr. Monroe Edwards*, would no longer

be desirable at the Legation. Hard upon this, and before he had time to digest the spleen it caused, came yet another, which the poor black girl, who seemed to know its purport from its shape, handed to her master with a look of profound despondency. It was from her rival Mary Moore, (not written by Mary for she could not write) and as Kitty shrewdly guessed, was either making a new requisition upon her master's person or his purse. When the storm rages all ties



EDWARDS AND WINFREE AT THE BARON SEAGRAVE'S.

that are not strong are torn away. The billet of the mercenary mistress had come just as the tempest was about to burst, and it called the fury out.

"Curse the foul slut!" exclaimed the Colonel, rising to his feet and trampling

the last paper on the floor. "Was I not sufficiently debased, but I must stain myself with such a vile connexion as this! Curse that hound Winfree too! He and this harlot are both of a stamp, and it is time I set 'em both adrift together!"

* This rule does not seem to hold with the press of New York; each member of which is as brave as a lion. The rule is a good rule nevertheless.

As soon as he had uttered these words his attention was attracted by a light clapping of hands, which, on turning

quickly round he perceived to come from Kitty, who sat humbly in a distant corner of the room. She had not been able to restrain this involuntary evidence of her delight at the prospect of her master's release from the brace of harpies who had caused her so much grief. The Colonel looked at the poor creature for a moment, when seeing her so abashed and so submissive for her unintended trespass, and being reminded likewise of her delicate condition, which now began to show itself through her male disguise, his rising anger softened to compassion, and walking up to her he patted her kindly on the back.

"Never mind Kitty," said he, as if apologizing for his neglect, "I'll be as good as my word, and when I am rid of these vermin everything will go well again. Never mind, I say," continued he as the poor creature began to evince the joyful fullness of her heart in tears, "Never mind, never mind!" and with these words he resumed his pace again up and down the room, muttering as he went, "Well, yours is the only true heart among them, after all!"

The Colonel was in great tribulation of soul, but he was not discouraged. He was still able to look the world in the face, and while so, he resolved not to strike his flag at the first summons. He called boldly at the American minister's in the morning, but not finding him at home he retired to his hotel and wrote him a letter, in which he bitterly though respectfully reproached him with undeserved treatment, in refusing to countenance him on the representation of a "mere foreign adventurer;" for such was the term that he bestowed on General Hamilton. He then went on to account for Hamilton's private animosity, and finally wound up by requesting that, if he, Mr. Stevenson, did not think proper to admit him to his association as before, he would at any rate abstain from giving any countenance to the Texan's slander, for a period of some two or three weeks, when certain gentlemen would arrive in London, from the States, whose endorsement would be irrefragable.

He received no reply to this request, but relying on its success from the known kindness of the American diplomat's disposition, he proceeded to accelerate some measures which he had kept in reserve as his last resource. This was an application to the British abolitionists, against all of whom he had taken a bitter spite since they had out-generalled him in New York. But there was no choice

left, so gathering together the various American newspapers which had published his manumission of the slaves, and manufacturing a few more spurious letters from the signatures among his philanthropic correspondence, he called upon the most prominent of the emancipationists of London, and soon set them in a blaze, by the exciting prospect which he opened on the Texas question. When he had got them into the proper tone to aid him with the Foreign Secretary, he explained to them that the American and Texan ministers had both found out his object, and consequently had endeavored to defeat and crush him by the grossest misrepresentations and most unscrupulous personal abuse. "A glaring evidence of the degree and rancor of this opposition," he remarked, "might be seen in the conduct of the American minister, who had treated him with the most distinguished courtesy on his first arrival, but as soon as he learned his intentions were to aim a blow at human slavery, had discarded him from his society, as if he had been some degraded person."

The whole of this story was swallowed at a gulp by those to whom it was addressed. They raised their hands and eyes to heaven, and then desired to know from each other, if such monstrous iniquity ever had been heard of. Consolations more direct were not wanting to our much abused hero, and assurances were given him that he was only another martyr in a holy cause, which, had he been a Christian, would have been a pious compensation for all his disappointments. But our hero was not yet quite enough of a saint to take his pay in this kind of coin; so he turned the sympathy to more account, and brought the united influence of these good people to bear in a manner so adroit, that he won another interview with the Foreign Secretary, in spite of the Texan minister's denouncements. What is still more remarkable, when we consider the accumulated circumstances against him, he actually obtained a distinct promise from the Secretary, that the British government would despatch a special agent to Texas to examine into the particulars of the case which he had laid before him.

This extraordinary triumph, however, was the Colonel's last exploit at the English court, for in the steamer that arrived a few days afterward from New York, came letters from Lewis Tappan and others, to their friends in London, which

crumbled his spurious credentials and pretensions into dust. Fortunately he got wind of this danger very early in its progress and finding that he must beat a brisk retreat, he slid off in the morning train to the residence of a wealthy widow near London, who was a member of the Anti-slavery association, and borrowed from her the sum of two hundred pounds, on some ingenious pretence. He went back to the city in the return train, and meeting Earl Spencer, obtained from him the loan of two hundred and fifty pounds; and following up his success, he secured a further sum of twenty pounds out of Daniel O'Connell. This was rapid work for one day. Indeed, it so strengthened the Colonel's spirits, that he determined to extend his stay for three or four days more, until which time he had no doubt he could stave off anything in the shape of a public exposure.

The Colonel's main reason for this delay was his desire to possess himself of a large lot of clothing that he had ordered of a celebrated Bond street tailor, and which he intended to possess himself of, without the vulgar formality of settling the bill. The order, it seems, was to the amount of one hundred pounds. The cautious tailor, who did not exactly understand the responsibility which might attach to his customer's rank, remarked significantly that the order was a very large one, and hinted distantly at references. "Sir," said the indignant Colonel, throwing down the American ambassador's card, "is *that* a reference sufficient?"

The tailor's hesitation was dispelled, and he made a low bow. "When the paltry order is made up," continued the Colonel, with a superciliousness almost amounting to disdain, "put the articles in a box, and direct them to me, at the office of the Legation."

Meanwhile the Colonel ascertained that the minister had made no whisper against him among any of the members of his suite. He therefore called boldly at the Legation, and stating that he was on the point of leaving town for two or three days, obtained permission to have a box left there for him, remarking that it would save trouble, as he had settled up at his hotel, and intended to depart for the continent immediately on his return. On the day appointed, one of the tailor's clerks called at the Legation, accompanied by a brawny porter, staggering under the weight of the box. The clerk inquired if any articles were to be left there for Colonel Edwards, and on re-

ceiving information that all was right, the porter deposited his load. On the following morning, the Colonel called, as if just arrived in town, and after paying his compliments for the accommodation, gave the box in charge of a drayman, and took his leave, chuckling secretly at having effected a smooth and profitable retaliation upon the minister who had treated him so cavalierly.

Being now prepared for his departure, so far as personal comforts and pecuniary means were concerned, it but remained for him to dispose of Winfree, and to make provision for poor Kitty. It was plain he could not take the slave-girl with him. Her boy's dress began to sit very awkwardly about her, and the developments of time would soon oblige her to assume the female habit altogether. He decided, therefore, to send her to New York, under the charge of Winfree, furnishing her privately with enough of means to render her independent of the 'sweater's' control, and to insure her good treatment among her own class, during her confinement. As to the miserable woman with whom he briefly consorted, his disgust scarcely allowed her a moment's thought.

Having settled upon these arrangements in his mind, he acquainted Winfree with the necessity of their immediate separation, silencing that gentleman's objections in advance, by intimating that it was a matter of personal safety for them both. Winfree, upon this, seemed content with all but the abandonment of Mary Moore. He had some notion that he could make her useful, and therefore plead that he might be allowed sufficient funds to take her with him. The proposal was unpalatable to the Colonel, but he at length agreed. He knew Winfree too well, however, to trust him with the money, and thus subject Kitty to the mercy of his sense of honest dealing. He therefore, went himself, accompanied by Winfree, to the office of one of the London and New York packets, and purchased three passage-tickets in the line packet Ontario, for *Colonel J. S. Winfree, lady, and servant*, which was to sail on the 14th day of January, 1841, then but two days to come. In addition to these tickets, he gave Winfree the sum of thirty pounds for contingencies, and directed him to convey the most useful articles from the trunks in their hotel, out by piecemeal, under a cloak, and bring those which belonged to him to his temporary lodgings.

The sudden change made in her pros-

pects by these arrangements, plunged the African girl in the deepest wo. She was, however, too submissive to complain, and trusting to the plausible assurances of her master with the absolute credulity of fondness, she hoped to see him soon again.

On the 13th of January, Colonel Monroe Edwards left London for Dover, and took packet for Calais, never to return to England again. On the 14th of the same month, Winfree and his trull; with the slave girl, *again* attired in female dress, was towed out of the St. Catherine docks, in the fine packet ship "Ontario," bound for the port of New York.

A few days after the departure of the hopeful troupe, the Bond-street tailor called at the American minister's, for Mr. Edwards, but not being able to gain a satisfactory account of his customer, he seemed disposed to throw the discredit of the transaction upon the Legation. Mr. Stevenson, therefore, to avoid the unpleasant publicity of a circumstance which, in its lightest construction, would show he had been duped, paid the bill himself. But to visit the loss where it seemed more properly to belong, he, with some chagrin, drew a draft for the amount upon the cabinet member, whose letter had introduced the swindler, venturing by way of postscript, to offer his friend a hint to be a little more careful in future, in furnishing credentials of gentility to stray adventurers. It may be as well to say in this place that some months afterward, Mr. Stevenson received a reply to this communication, which made indignant denial on the part of the writer, of ever having given the letter of introduction referred to. The cabinet member remarked, however, that about six months previous he had received a letter from a Mr. Monroe Edwards, begging for his autograph, which he admitted might have been turned to the account that had been described.

CHAPTER XVII.

Arrival in Paris—A call on Gen. Cass—An Unexpected Rencontre—The Slaver's Story.

Though our friend, the Colonel, had been frustrated in his bold project with the English Government, he had not been entirely defeated in all his objects of speculation. He left the realm with more money in his pockets than he had arrived with, and he had reaped the singular advantage moreover, of free-

himself from a clog in the companionship of Winfree, which had long been a dead weight upon all his efforts.

He did not know exactly what to do in Paris. He had sought it rather in the way of an alternative, than as a chosen field for new exertions. It could not be expected that the French Government would interest itself in a measure of philanthropy that had failed to excite the cupidity of Britain; and minor expedients of finance and finesse were rather out of the question with a people whose language he was very indifferently versed in. The Colonel determined therefore, to make his sojourn in the capital one of pleasure entirely, and as he stroked down his magnificent whiskers on the adoption of this idea, it seemed to him not improbable, that while there, good fortune might visit him in the inviting form of a lovely young lady with an interesting portion.

In accordance with these views, he took a suite of rooms at one of the most fashionable hotels in the city, and gave the Bond street tailor's unexceptionable garments an opportunity of contrast with the Parisian habits, that would have been a full compensation to the London tailor, could he have been a witness to his triumph, for the loss of their price.

There being no difficulty in getting into society in Paris, the Colonel did not feel called upon to put himself to the laborious effort of fabricating credentials, as he had done before. He however considered it worth the while to call upon General Cass at the American Legation, as an apparent intercourse with that distinguished gentleman would afford some color to the pretensions that were involved in his style of living and personal appearance. But the Colonel might as well have travelled past this calculation, for on sending in his card at the Legation, he had the mortification to receive it back by the hands of the messenger, with the reply that the American Minister had received a communication from General Hamilton that would obviate the necessity of any visit from Mr. Edwards at the Legation. This was a severe blow for the pride and prospects of our hero, but the exercise of a little of the same philosophy which had but recently been called into requisition in London, soon reconciled him to the slight, and encouraged him to do without the light of the Minister's countenance, as he had done before.

An event took place in a few days however, that made full amends to the Colonel for all his mortifications and

drawbacks. On entering a large and popular café in the neighborhood of the Boulevards one afternoon, he was struck with the appearance of a figure which sat partly turned away from the door. Though the features of the person were not to be seen, there was something in the turn of the shoulder and set of the head that was familiar as old acquaintances. The Colonel advanced with some excitement, but getting a look at the stranger's face he, in the next moment was shaking both the hands of Holcroft the slaver.

It is unnecessary to describe the raptures of this meeting. The reader who is aware of the close relations of the two parties and the nature of their separation some years before, can imagine the degree of their transports, for himself. Suffice it for the present, that Edwards anchored himself at the table which the slaver until then had occupied alone, and the solitary and half emptied bottle that had pandered to the reflections of the former for the previous half hour, was speedily emptied and replaced by a more sufficient substitute.

"Well, who the devil expected to see *your* face here?" said the slaver, resting his hand on the bottle after having filled both glasses, and looking curiously into the Colonel's face as if still inclined to doubt his identity.

"Or who yours?" replied Edwards, "but," added he, after a close look at his old companion's face; "you have another testimonial of hard times upon your cheek, I see!"

"Yes," answered Holcroft, "the compliment of a stone hatchet, that's all. I got it after dinner one day in Madagascar."

"A long way to go for such a favor!" said Edwards.

"I had my offset;" replied Holcroft, "but never mind that now,"

THE SLAVER'S STORY.

"You recollect that when I left you in Vera Cruz I sailed for New Orleans. Circumstances rendered my stay very short in that quarter, and receiving a letter from an old associate at Matanzas, who had some profitable speculations in view, I waived my intention of going to Texas, and set out for Cuba. I found my friend in Matanzas, but on the point of crossing the island for Camarones. Not choosing to accompany him I decided to remain where I was till his return. The city, however, soon grew tiresome to me, and I accepted the invitation of a Spanish gentleman, whose acquaintance I had

made in a billiard room, to accompany him for a few days to his plantation, situated on the Canima river, a very beautiful stream that empties in the harbor of Matanzas, about four or five miles distant from the town. My host had a very beautiful estate. It was a sugar plantation, and it contained sixty-five slaves. The other portions of the fixed property were handsome country house, and an Andalusian wife. This lady was about thirty-five years of age. It was plain from her conformation, and the violent brightness of her eyes, that she was a woman of strong appreciations. Though past her prime, she was still handsome, and though her charms had exhaled somewhat of their fragrance, her discrimination had not suffered a similar deterioration, for she fell in love with me. This state of things rendered me rather uneasy. As a man of honor, I was not disposed to violate the trusts of hospitality; but to tell you the truth, my friend, I wrestled with temptation very clumsily. It happened that a message called my host to town so suddenly one day that it left me no time to get ready to accompany him; so it was agreed that I should preside for him till his return. I did this, as it turned out, in a larger sense than he bargained for. I tried to preserve the scrupulous civility due in such cases to the lady under my charge, but there is great danger in rural scramblings, and an unfortunate fall which he lady met with obviated any further necessity of excessive fastidiousness between us. We became familiar from that moment, and I must admit that I found vast justification for my trespass in some communications made me in confidence by the lady. On the third day her husband returned, and in a week afterward I left with him for the city. My friend had not yet got back, and I found the town hanging so heavy on my hands that I concluded to take a jaunt to the Havana, and while away a few days in that delightful capital. I took this opportunity also to write a letter to you by a vessel that sailed about that time for New Orleans."

"I never received it," said Edwards.

"On the morning of my intended departure," continued Holcroft without noticing the interruption, "I received a note with a black seal, which, on opening, I found to be written by the Donna. It contained the announcement of her husband's sudden death, and besought me to fly to her and console her in her affliction. I turned this letter over two or



EDWARDS DISCOVERING THE SLAVER IN THE PARISIAN CAFÉ.

three times without being able to understand it. Her husband was a healthy man, of rather active structure, and not at all inclined to apoplexy, which was the assigned cause of his decease. However, the wishes of a widow with a sugar plantation and sixty-five slaves, were not to be disregarded, so I set out at once. I have seen much better corpses than the Spaniard, in men who have been run through the body with a boarding pike. There was a suspicious tinge about his flesh, and he showed a disposition to swell, which the laws of apoplexy do not require. I wept with but one eye, but the lady tore her hair with such effect, that the priest was in an ecstasy of admiration at the depth of her despair. His reverence was deceived however, in the hope that it was deep enough to send her to the convent, for I, also, had my eye upon the sugar plantation and the slaves. The result was that when the lady had raved to the full requirements of decency, she gave me her hand and made me lawful possessor of her property. I was very willing to embrace the opportunity. It was somewhat more eligible to get sixty-five sound niggers, to say nothing of a fine estate, at the mere service to a lady's transports, than to brave the sea and jeopardize one's neck for half the object."

"I should decidedly prefer that mode of *transportation*, myself," replied Edwards with a laugh.

"Though something of a lady's man upon occasion," resumed the slaver, with a grim smile, "I am not much given to domestic habits. I got tired, not exactly of my wife, but of the house, and so set out to town to look after my friend again. I found him. He commenced telling me of the success of the enterprise from which he had just returned, when I delayed him for a moment by giving him a hint of my condition. He went into ecstasies of the most extravagant character, and seizing my hand again and again in the course of a minute, protested that our fortunes were made. "I consider *mine* already so," said I, with some little distrust of the extreme agrarianism of my friend. "Valuable only as the means to accomplish better things," said he abruptly. He then went on to describe to me the designs of an extensive combination of brave fellows who had followed the ocean in various ways for many years, and who were sprinkled about the innumerable islands, keys, sand-bars and coral-reefs of the West Indies. Their confederacy he now

desired me to join. The design, he said, was to carry on the slave trade on a grand scale, and to obviate the necessity of the brokers or middle men, who stand between the rover and the planter to absorb two-thirds of the profit of the traffic. An eligible location in the Gulf of Guinea, near the island of Fernando Po, had already been thought of for a colony, where the parties calculated to build a fort and lay out a town. At this place they intended to establish themselves in force, nourishing the settlement by emigration, and establishing extensive warehouses for the supply of such chance traders as appeared upon the coast. They would also enter into diplomatic arrangements with the interior tribes, by which means they could obtain what number of slaves they pleased, and drain at will, the whole region of the Niger of the best character of negroes. Out of the proceeds of the common fund, an estate was to be purchased in Brazil, to which these slaves were to be transferred. As the prosperity of the company advanced, they were to keep enlarging their plantation in Brazil, commensurate with the increase of the negro transports. In this way a monster estate would grow up on one side, while huge establishments would flourish on the other. The vessels would constantly convey poor emigrants gratis to the colony instead of going to the coast in ballast. Coming back, they would bring their argosies of captives to coin their fields into rice, coffee, and other valuable products. If managed with prudence, immense wealth would be the result, and power enough must accrue to the company, to awe or bribe the Brazilian officers from any interference.

"This was rather a rough outline of a comprehensive project, but I saw enough in it to inflame my imagination. I saw that everything would depend upon the leader, and I felt disposed, if that position were allowed me, to embark in the enterprise and see if some portions might not be worked to good account. I hinted this to my friend and he readily acceded to the idea, adding by way of endorsing it back for the re-approval of my own mind, that the means which I could now throw into the enterprise, would, with the claims of my former experience, entitle me to the command. There were, he said, already seven vessels, with full armaments, ready to engage in the adventure, and if I could come into the field with two more, I might calculate with certainty upon the main con-

trol. Two good vessels and their armaments might be had for thirty thousand dollars; a sum which he remarked I could easily command, as it was well known that my estate was worth at the least, seventy thousand dollars.

The prospect thus laid open to me took full possession of my mind, and I returned to my wife and acquainted her with my intention to go to sea. As she was a woman, I met with a natural opposition, but when I notified the good lady of my intention of making free with her property, by mortgage, to the extent I have named, I brought out some of the qualities of her disposition which had not yet been called to the surface. She did not exactly tear at my eyes, but I verily believe she would have done so had I not with a salutary forethought boxed her ears, on suspicion. My wife was a shrewd woman, as I have indicated before, and therefore swallowed the rebuke quietly, but she digested it like a panther, as the future proved. I raised the money and journeying to the Havana and even to Puerto Principe, I managed to obtain two vessels to my mind. I put in them forty men each. Six twelve pound carronades and one long-tom were stowed in their holds, and ample stores of ammunition, boarding pikes, muskets, cutlasses, and assortments of bunting, were distributed between them. I took command of the first and my friend had charge of the second. Being all ready, one left the port of Havana and the other that of Matanzas on the same day, when steering to the westward, we doubled Cape San Antonio for the Isle of Pines.

I found nothing short of what had been represented to me by my vice-admiral. A secure cave, the mouth of which was guarded by cannon, offered a council hall for about three hundred stout fellows, and in a sub-cavern a dozen merry coiners were busily at work manufacturing spurious five franc pieces and Spanish American dollars, to contribute nerves and arteries to our enterprize. Most of these artizans were Frenchmen, from Martinique. Two of them were Englishmen however, and there was a New Yorker among them, whom I had once met in New Orleans. We understood each other after a few debates and the organization of our body was soon complete. Some of us were soon at sea, but by consent, I was despatched to Brazil to make purchase of the farm. I will not delay your curiosity with the details of all my movements now. We shall have leisure plenty for that by and by.

It is enough, at present to acquaint you, that I selected a square league on the river Doce, in Espirito Santo, the fertile province which adjoins that of Rio Janeiro, on the north. In due time I had the plantation laid out, and an early arrival of three hundred fine negroes, enabled us to break ground to some purpose. Being no agriculturalist, and unused to regular thrift, I soon became tired of my vocation. Besides, I also began to feel some tugs of natural affection for my wife, and the property I had left on the banks of the Canima. Stirred by these dutiful considerations, I resolved to return to Cuba before I made a voyage to the "Coast." I might as well, nay better, have saved myself the jaunt, for on my arrival at Matanzas, I found that my wife had run off with my overseer a few months after my departure, and that the estate and the negroes had fallen into other hands. I had nothing to do, therefore, but to curse her for a — and go back to the Brazils.

I found the plantation on the Doce in a state of admirable advancement. A cargo of tobacco and rice had already found its way to Victoria and from thence to Rio, enriching us in return with abundant implements required for the prospective extension of our operations. A superintendant, several overseers, bookkeepers, salesmen and a treasurer, now took care of our complicated domestic interests, and the plantation really began to wear the appearance of a young commonwealth. Its rising importance had not escaped the observation of the provincial authorities, and the president of the district had already paid it a visit and showed us some favor. Things being in this favorable state I embraced the occasion of the arrival of one of my vessels, to take command and set out for the Gulf of Guinea. Twenty six emigrants accompanied me from Rio on this occasion, nine of whom were Europeans, while the rest were smart Mamlucos.*

Our colony on the coast was not as far advanced as I had anticipated by our prosperity in Espirito Santo. It is true the settlers had constructed a pretty substantial adobie fort which mounted some twenty cannon, but the location was ineligible, and it could be formidable only to the natives. Beyond this structure, there was scarcely a building of more importance than bamboo huts. There were several causes for this negligence; but the principal of all, was the ruinous

* The Mamlucos, are that portion of the Creole population, produced by the intercourse of the whites with the native Indians.

license of the settlers with the native women. When to this were added the enervating influences of a torrid climate, the pervading indolence was not strange. I had much to do to counteract the increasing tendency to sloth, and the general disregard of all method or authority in our operations. I selected a site for a new fortification, and after it was built, I occupied the attention of the settlers, and kept up their spirit of enterprise, by projecting an expedition to the interior, which occupied several weeks. We passed through some twenty petty kingdoms; enjoyed all the courtesies and pomp which barefoot royalty could bestow upon us, and in the end returned loaded with presents of gaudy feathers, ivory, gold dust, and female slaves.

I found the people of the fort in great commotion. On entering the place I was waited on by my Matanzas friend, who told me that he had a budget of bad news to communicate. Two of our best cruisers had been taken by the English, and a third had enlarged the margin of her sailing orders, and seized a rich Portuguese merchantman, under the black flag. The worst of all was, that having plundered the Portuguese of some \$100,000 in gold, the rovers had declared themselves independent of the confederacy, and set out for the Indian Ocean on a free commission. This was a defection that was not to be tolerated, so I proposed to follow and chastise the mutineers into restitution, and a full sense of their dishonesty. The rich booty to be recovered, convinced every hearer of the justice of my denunciations of our faithless comrades. The best of the band offered themselves, and I was soon on the sea with my bowsprit pointing to the Antarctic. We watered in a snug bay on the southeast coast, just after doubling the Cape of Good Hope, and there got tidings from the natives of our runaways. They were bound to Madagascar, whereupon I shrewdly conjectured I should drop on them somewhere in the Mozambique channel. It turned out as I had calculated: I overhauled them in two days after making the Cape St. Mary, and after a chase of several hours run them ashore in a small cove, where I anchored in about three fathoms water. I got out my boats immediately, but before I could reach the shore, the whole of the fugitive crew had taken to the impervious jungles that came down almost to the water's edge. I did not attempt to pursue, but contented myself with taking possession of the grounded

vessel, and transferring every scrap of provision and article of value to my own. On the second day I tried an expedition beyond the maze of woods which bound the shore, but fell victim to an ambush which cost me several men and this ugly scar on my cheek which has attracted so much of your attention. It was the compliment of a native, who, with some of his brethren, had already made friendship with the mutineers, and took a hand in the fight apparently for the mere fun of the thing. I found there was nothing to do but retreat, and having regained the beach, I set fire to the stranded vessel, and cut off all hopes of the mutineers' escape. This drove them to despair, and that night I had a deputation sent to me to make terms of compromise. I rejected all overtures, but taking two of them aside, I promised them in confidence, if they, by themselves, would come to me with the money which had been taken from the Portuguese, they should be admitted on board and sail with me in the morning. The privilege, however, was not open for another man. The offer sank deep in their bosoms, and keeping their own counsel, they disinterred the gold, and with the aid of three of my men brought it to the vessel. I had now gained the main part of my object, and hoisting sail, I bore away from the island just as the sun was breaking the edge of the horizon. I half relented of my determination to forsake the mutineers as I saw them on the bank beside the ashes of their only hope, gazing despondently on our departing track; but an example was necessary to those I had on board, so I never looked behind.

We found disaster in the colony on our return. A malignant fever had broken out among the settlers and laid more than two thirds of our best followers with their faces upwards. The rest were so shaken with disease that they were shadows rather than substantial men. In addition to this, the negroes had taken advantage of their weakness, and to the number of three or four thousand, had made a combined attack upon the settlement, which resulted in the loss of some lives and the dismantling of the lower fort. I heard nothing but murmurings and despair. The demand was universal to leave the Coast and return to Brazil for a division of our effects. I yielded of necessity, and we all set out. But things had not worked much better on the Doce. We had a splendid farm it was true, with about eight or nine hundred negroes upon it, but some of our rascally confederates

had become defaulters and ran away with all the available assets within their reach. In addition to this the seditious independence of some of our half savage members had given offence to the provincial government, and ran us within hair's breadth of sequestration. A wise glance at the state of affairs told me that the elements of our association were not calculated for permanent cohesion, so I advocated a sale and a division. This was not practicable from the extent of the property, but it procured for me an offer of the purchase of my interest which I disposed of gladly for thirty thousand dollars.

"Merely the amount of your original investment;" said Edwards parenthetically.

"No more," replied the slaver; "but satisfied to escape even in this way, from a speculation which I plainly saw was fast tending to ruin and confusion, I bade them a pleasant farewell, and set out for Cuba from whence I had started. I did this instinctively, as the intermediate time had virtually been thrown away, and I wanted to go back and start afresh. Led by such a notion I naturally made new inquiries after my wife, and this time gained more information than before. By means of some letters which she had written to a female friend, I learned she had located herself in Paris with her gallant, and was probably still living there as his wife. I was at leisure, so I resolved to amuse myself in giving her a chase. This explains to you the reason of my being here."

"Well, have you found her?" inquired the Colonel eagerly.

"Yes, but in a condition that made a jest of my endeavors. She is a nurse in the *Hopital des Vénériens*, and to judge by her nose, she entered the establishment duly qualified. Master Overseer, it seems, disappeared from her domicile one fine morning about six months after their arrival in the city, and as he ran off with all her money, she had no recourse but the street. She probably found the hospital in the natural way. At any rate she has been there now, a year.

"You will probably meet with but little opposition in recovering her then;" said the Colonel drily.

The slaver made no reply, but the queer smile which he bent for a moment on his companion, shewed that he fully appreciated the humorous irony of the remark.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Continuation of the Conference between the Colonel and the Slaver—Plans for the future—The Plains of the Amazon—Departure from Paris.

Holcroft having concluded his story, Edwards gave a signal to the waiter for another bottle of wine, preparatory to beginning his own. Previous to the return of the attendant, however, he inquired of the slaver, who had commenced to light a cigar as an evidence that he claimed an intermission, what was his future purpose, now that the loadstone of his visit had lost its virtue?

"Well, to tell you the truth," replied Holcroft, "until yesterday I was at a loss how to shape my course. An idea struck me to-day, however, which I think may be turned to account. It is in relation to this new treaty."

"What new treaty?" said Edwards.

"How," replied the slaver in surprise, "is it possible that you, who are a Texan, have not heard of the new treaty made between Texas and France? It has been promulgated here a week!"

"Well, what of it?" remarked the Colonel quietly, for his interest in Texas and Texan affairs had very sensibly declined since his recent defeats at the court of St. James.

"This of it," replied the slaver curtly, "the treaty provides for an enlarged intercourse between Texas and the French West India islands, and it accords to the latter, as well as French Guiana, the same privileges of trade and navigation with Texas as she allows to the most favored nations. For instance, Texas formerly permitted the introduction of slaves into its territory from no other country than the United States; but by this 'most favored nation' clause, they may be imported from Martinique, or wherever in the French West Indies they are most cheap. Do you see the point I wish to come at now?"

"No," replied Edwards, still affecting to be dull, "but I shall see it when you point it out."

"Doubtless," answered Holcroft, in a tone slightly tinged with sarcasm, "but if you will take another look at the subject you may perhaps perceive that the first who take advantage of this branch of the treaty, will make a fortune. The slaves, or the apprentices which are just as good, are worth little or nothing in Martinique, while they range from eight hundred to a thousand dollars in Texas. Do you understand me now?"

"Yes; I partly comprehend your calculation," answered Edwards, recognizing his own old speculation in the slaver's project; "but I do not conceive it to be more advantageous than the regular trade between the Brazils and the coast; by no means as eligible as the speculation which you recently abandoned in the former country, for that retained all the profits of your labor to your own association, while this would contribute them mainly to the Texan purchasers."

"Oh, give me credit for more sense than that, my friend," said Holcroft, with an affected reproachfulness of tone. I had *your* co-operation in my eye when I conceived the plan. I heard that you had become possessed of a large extent of land in Texas, and I contemplated reviving in that country, with your assistance, the Brazilian farm on a more limited, but at the same time a more safe and rational scale.

"Unfortunately there are two insuperable objections to this," said Edwards. In the first place the treaty cannot confer such privileges as you name; and in the second, circumstances equally insurmountable, would exclude me from the speculation, if it did. But here is the wine; and as the history of my operations since I parted with you will show the force of these objections, I will leave their explanation to the course of the narrative."

"I shall be happy to hear it," said the slaver, lifting from the table the foaming glass which the Colonel had just filled; "I must say, however," continued he, before he put it to his lips, "that I am convinced you are wrong about the powers of the treaty. I am assured by a very able lawyer whom I met this morning, that the traffic can be carried on under it; and to satisfy myself more completely, I have directed an application to M. Berryer, for his written opinion on the subject."

"Well, we won't debate that now," said Edwards, waving his hand in respectful indication that he would commence.

The slaver nodded his head in courteous acquiescence, and resuming his segar, threw himself into a position to listen to the tale with ease.

We will not follow the forger in his story at the expense of recapitulation. Let it serve for the reader that the Colonel ran over what we have already faithfully related, making no material additions to the tale beyond the description of a few intrigues which he incidentally

introduced by way of a passing tribute to his large conceit. The slaver listened attentively and without interrupting the relator, from the beginning to the end. When Edwards stopped however, and leaned forward to relight his segar as a signal that he had done, the seaman spoke.

"Hard luck, indeed;" said he in serious iteration of the Colonel's closing expression. "So everything has gone, eh?"

"Everything;" replied the Colonel, with an ornamented puff of the segar smoke from his mouth.

"Well, there is no help for the past, but we must try and do something for the future. I see all the objections to this new business; but the plan is a good plan."

"Not as good a one as has been suggested to my mind by your adventures," answered the Colonel. "Listen now, and I'll propose something which I think will meet your views. This running the gauntlet in the Gulf between Martinique and Velasco, is all an illusion; before we knew it, we should be in the gripe of some English cruiser, who would confiscate our property and leave us to contest for years the sanction of the French treaty, which in the end would be decided against us."

"I confess you have taken a very strong view of the subject;" said the slaver; "but let us hear your plan."

"My plan," said Edwards, "is founded upon yours, but it steers clear of its mistakes. Your great error was in attempting to establish a colony upon the Coast. If instead of undergoing that care, or assuming its tremendous and fruitless expense, you had paid all your attention to your Brazilian interests, directed your vessels to drop at will upon any portion of the coast to pick up their cargoes and then leave, you could have accomplished all your calculations and been at this moment a formidable power."

"You are right," said Holcroft. "The African colony divided our attention, and by requiring a double set of leading men, promoted strife. Besides, as you intimate, it was an expense without a commensurate object, for we could have got cargoes when we wanted them from any portion of the coast."

"The main conception, however, was admirable!" exclaimed Edwards, "and when combined and improved with some features which may be drawn from the history of the Texas settlement, may be prosecuted to the most brilliant results."

There are better districts in Brazil than Espirito Santo, and sites equally favorable with that upon the Doce. It is in too close proximity to the central power. Now I would propose an establishment upon the Amazon, and far enough in the interior to be beyond the supervision of any active authority strong enough to interfere with it. The Amazon nearly divides the continent; it is navigable for ships from the Atlantic almost to the Andes, and its shores embrace in many stretches the most fertile districts and valuable forests in the world. These distant plains though hidden from the eye of nations and beyond the immediate observation of the effeminate power of the Brazilian government, are nevertheless within a step of the great high roads of the world. Their produce will be carried down to the Atlantic upon the bosom of a stream that does not offer a rapid in two thousand miles, and if we wish to seek the other ocean, we have but to turn our prows westward and when done sailing, make sixty miles land travel to the Pacific. If an establishment could be formed in that place on the plan of the nucleus on the Doce, my word for it, in five or six years we could establish an independent state."

"Where would you get your emigrants from to accomplish this great object?" said the slaver.

"We would send our products exclusively to the United States, or perhaps to Europe, and never return without full cargoes of able-bodied passengers, carried free," replied Edwards with enthusiasm. "Let us but once get a thousand men together there, and no South American state can bring sufficient force together to dislodge us."

"They might not," replied Holcroft, "but they could nip our enterprise at pleasure by blockading the river. No, no, your plan will not do. The Amazon is not the place. No Saxon commonwealth can exist in a torrid latitude, unless in an elevated region; at least not under the equator. The pampas or plains of the Amazon are all low, and the heat of the region would melt the buttons off a soldier's coat. I'll tell you however, what we can do. We can go back to the farm upon the Doce and see if there is any room left for speculation in that quarter. The chance is, that there may be a few remnants of the confederacy left, and if the most troublesome spirits have departed we may revive the scheme, and guided by the experience of the past navigate it successfully for the future.

Between us we can control it. When there before, I had no one in whose fidelity I could implicitly rely, and therefore withdrew, but if you had have been with me I should have anchored myself to the concern. How much means have you at your present command?"

"Inside of eleven hundred dollars," replied the Colonel.

"Not enough to enter the party in the imposing condition that our united object will require," said Holcroft, "but perhaps we can manage it nevertheless," added he thoughtfully.

"I have a notion in my mind on that subject," said the Colonel quickly, as he broke from a short reverie, "but of that to-morrow. Come, we have sat here long enough; let us finish our glasses and go to the opera."

"As you like," said the slaver, and rising the worthy companions left the café.

As they stepped outside upon the promenade, Holcroft paused suddenly and turning upon Edwards remarked: "Ah, in the earnestness of our conversation I forgot to advise you that I have found it convenient to change my name. I did it to prevent my wife from becoming apprised of my presence in this country. You will therefore know me hereafter by the name of Mr. Charles F. Johnson, if you please."

"Uncle Charles if you like;" jocosely replied the Colonel. "It matters not to me," added he, "what led you to the change; you are nothing but Mr. Johnson with me from this time out."

Uncle Charles bowed politely in return for his friend's complaisance and the excellent pair proceeded on.

On the following morning Edwards had digested his intentions better. He had duly revolved the slaver's offer in his mind, and found in it, at the least, the same good chance which had first set him up in life: If nothing better should grow out of the expedition, the slave-trade and a fly captain's commission was still open for his adoption. But he had better thoughts. Vain of his nefarious powers and self-reliant from their marked success, he believed that he might by another bold trial of his counterfeiting skill secure a sudden sum that would carry him down to the slave plantation as a man of mark. The field of the experiment should be the United States whither he was bound to return in common humanity to the poor creature who had followed him so long. He had set her adrift between two wretches whose moral texture was dark-

er than her skin, and it behoved him to see that she had not shipwrecked upon the salient dangers of their baseness. Besides, she bore within her at the time of her departure, a claim upon his kindness that could not be peacefully foregone.

In the conference that ensued between the two adventurers, it was duly agreed that they should adopt the course proposed at the conclusion of their conversation on the previous day. Edwards decided that he would leave in a few days for New-York, and Johnson, who seemed to have some individual objects still to accomplish in Paris, was to remain a week or ten days behind and then set out with a ship captain, who was an old acquaintance, for the Island of Cuba. There the Colonel was to rejoin him, after he had accomplished a few objects of speculation in the United States, which he did not definitely explain, but which he significantly hinted would turn to large account.

The following fortnight was spent in such liberal enjoyments as a metropolitan city offers to men of unscrupulous morals, at the end of which time, the Colonel bade his friend good bye, ran down to Havre, and took the packet for New-York.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Impulse—The Episode of the Burglar and the Forger—Arrival in New-York—Commencement of the Great Forgery—The Fraudulent Letter—Mr. Nicholas Johnson.

The design which had seized the mind of Edwards just previous to his departure from France,* had been suggested to him by the news of a series of masterly forgeries, to the extent of \$60,000 that had just been performed in the United States by two unknown persons, who were represented to have successfully escaped with their plunder to foreign climes. As these achievements became in a manner interwoven with the Texan's fate, it may be well briefly to describe them.

In the winter of 1840, a professional alliance was formed in the city of New-York between a burglar and a forger, each of whom was the most accomplished in his especial line at that time in

America. In laying out designs of plunder, it was unsettled for a time whether the firm should devote itself first to the vocation of the "screwsmen" or the scribe; but by way of affording joint satisfaction, it was finally decided that an exploit should be devised that would make an equal demand upon the talents of each. The forger had a thorough and an acute knowledge of commercial and financial operations, and the burglar skill enough to wheedle the fastenings that bound the beast in the Revelations. They went to New Orleans, where the burglar setting himself to work, in a few nights fitted false keys to the doors of the Commercial Bank, and gave himself and his partner ingress to the vaults. Having then performed his share of the task, the conduct of the remaining portion of the enterprise was left to the forger. In accordance with the latter's strict commands therefore, not a single note or coin from the tempting heaps that lay before their eyes was touched, but they simply satisfied themselves with mousing about the desks and securing some letters from the correspondence of the cashier with the agents of the bank in the Northern cities; with selecting also a few blank certificates of deposit, several sheets of blank paper, and a vial full of the ink used by the officers in filling up drafts and writing letters. Content with these prizes alone, they carefully restored every article to the exact condition in which they had found it, and left the bank after locking every door carefully behind them.* With the papers now in their possession the forger was enabled to draw letters in the cashier's hand to several banks and brokers, enclosing in each, one-half of a spurious certificate of deposit, and notifying the agent to cash it, on presentation of the other half, by the individual in whose favor it was drawn. Five of these letters, enclosing such certificates, were drawn. Two of them enclosing drafts for \$13,000 each, were directed, the one to the Kentucky Bank at Louisville, and the other to the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati. Another for \$21,000 was to the Girard Bank at Philadelphia; a fourth

* The object of the burglars in preferring the means to get by a forgery, what they might have seized outright, without further trouble, was to obtain the money in a manner that would give them time to escape with it. It would be exceedingly difficult for two suspicious characters to get out of the country with a large amount of money after the bank was known to be robbed, but forgeries on a Southern bank, presented successfully in the North, would give three or four weeks impunity from detection.

* It is said that Edwards went from Havre to Liverpool, and from thence to the United States by the way of the West Indies. This, however, is not material. It is enough that his return was secret, and that he arrived at New-York in the latter part of June, 1841.

for \$18,000 to the Franklin Bank of Baltimore, and a fifth for \$23,000 to Jacob Little of New-York. Depositing these letters in the New Orleans post office, all on the same day, the two rascals immediately set out up the river to present and collect the remaining half certificates which they held in their possession.

It turned out as they expected. In every place the letters had arrived before them, and the regularity of the proceedings precluded all suspicion. They obtained the proceeds of the two \$13,000 drafts in Louisville and Cincinnati without any difficulty. The \$21,000 certificate was cashed with as little demur at the Girard Bank, and all risk of suspicion adroitly headed off, by the voluntary re-deposit by the forger of \$5,000 of the amount. The \$23,000 certificate was next paid by Jacob Little in New-York, with but very little hesitation, as to the identity of the holder. Indeed, the only failure at all, was at the Franklin Bank of Baltimore, where the rogues finding themselves too closely scrutinized, and observing one of the officers moreover to clandestinely leave the bank, they took to their heels and fled. In a few days however, they were safely on the seas, leaving the whole community behind them in consternation at the boldness and adroitness of their frauds, and everybody, the police as well as the banks, at a loss as to who could be the perpetrators, and how they had possessed themselves of the secrets of correspondence, necessary to the accomplishment of such extraordinary exploits.

Edwards shared this wonder to the uttermost, but the mystery while it heightened his admiration, engaged him in imagining circumstances that might solve the riddle. An employment of this kind to a mind so keen and of such grasp as his, could not fail in being attended by some marked result; so therefore, as he revolved supposition over supposition, his brightening thought at length seized a method that unwound the puzzle, or at least, that revealed to him a chance as good as that which made it.

Thus it was that he took the conception of that last great scheme which hatched consequences so darkly momentous to himself, and compromised the lives of two distinguished public men, who became involved in its tortuous relations.

The first care of Edwards on arriving at New-York, and depositing his baggage at his Hotel, was to make enquiries after Kitty. Those who have kept pace with our history will recognise the

reasons he had to desire to see her with all the ardor of a very close acquaintance. There were two roads for him to proceed about his task, one of which was to enquire for Mary Moore at the brothels; the other to seek out Winfree in the purlieus of the gaming houses. His disgust for the first of these two characters however, was so insuperable, that he chose the latter measure as the least repulsive; so setting about his search, he found the sweater after a two hours' effort in one of the haunts where he had expected to discover him. Winfree, who was in a state of semi-intoxication, displayed considerable embarrassment when interrogated as to Kitty's whereabouts, but after a number of confused explanations in the shape of apologies, he informed the Colonel, that the African girl was lying-in at the Bellevue Hospital.—Edwards did not stop to waste indignation on the worthless fellow, but having gained his object, abruptly left him, and on the following day set out for the Asylum. Though through her labor, the girl had not yet risen from her bed, yet she gave promise of returning strength that was quite satisfactory to one who wished her well.

In relating the events that had happened to her since she left England, she had little to say in favor of either of her less honest travelling companions; her consignment to the public charity having been the direct result of their shameless appropriation of her little means. She forgot her wrongs however, in the gratification of seeing her master, and in the additional satisfaction that she experienced on being informed he would send for her in a few days to Philadelphia, whither he intended to go on the morrow, and where he purposed to remain for several weeks.

Three or four days elapsed however, before Edwards consummated the first of these intentions; but he arrived in Philadelphia on the afternoon of the 8th July (1841) and put up at Jones' Hotel, in Chestnut street.

Filled with his scheme he did not intend to let it cool upon his hands, but on the very night of his arrival remained all the evening in his room, devoting himself to the careful construction of a fraudulent letter, that was to be the first movement in a grand but nefarious game, which has been justly characterized as the most extraordinary effort of perverted genius ever performed in this or any other country. A scheme so profoundly laid and so wonderfully perform-

ed, that its developments elicited the mingled admiration and pity of the highest minds, and drew from the dignified Judge who analysed it, the reproachful tribute, that in its wicked accomplishment the perpetrator had displayed an ingenuity and talent, an accuracy of memory, a dexterity of detail, a power of nerve, a promptness of thought, and a well constituted system of arrangement, which in some sort justified the expression of one of the counsel that the mental combination, would have reflected credit on the qualities of a Napoleon.

The letter which Edwards was engaged in writing on the evening of the 8th July, and which was to be the fulcrum of his plan, was directed to Messrs. Maunsel, White & Co., a very extensive and wealthy commercial house of New Orleans, upon whose signature he designed to perpetrate his frauds. The object of the letter was a double one; first to obtain the signature of the firm, and next to ascertain who were their agents in the great city of New York, that he might palm its forgery upon them. It was necessary that the communication for this purpose should be very ingeniously drawn, bearing all the plausibility of an apparently substantial motive, and disguising at the same time, the care exerted in its construction by an off hand ready business style. We append herewith a copy of the letter, that the reader may judge for himself as to the ability displayed in the endeavor to accomplish these objects.

"PHILA., 9th July, 1841.

MESSRS. MAUNSEL, WHITE & Co.—

GENTLEMEN:—My Brother & self having lately become proprietors of a large Cotton Estate in Phillips City, Arkansas, are anxious of forming our arrangements in your city for the agency of the same. Our friend, Mr. Gray, of Richmond, has recommended your House to us as one in every way calculated to protect our interest, and I therefore write with the view to know if you will take the agency of said plantation. It is now producing from 800 to 1000 bales, & we contemplate increasing the number of Negroes. We shall not want any advances until our first crop is in hand, nor shall we then require any advance beyond what is usual for the plantation supplies &c. We have been told that probably one of your House will be on north this summer; if so we should like to see him in person and will be glad to be informed of his wharabouts.

We know nothing of cotton planting

ourselves but intend to send out a competent manager. We also wish to send out an Engine and several approved agricultural implements from New York, and we will be obliged if you will send us the address of your New York correspondent, through whom we will order the articles we want. Your early attention to this letter will greatly oblige

Gentlemen

Yr. Obt. Servt.

H. S. HILL.

P. S. Direct to me at the Exchange Hotel, Baltimore."

This was just the kind of letter calculated to ensure the eager attention of a commercial house like the one to which it was addressed, and Mr. Hugh S. Hill, or rather Mr. Monroe Edwards, was not a whit too sanguine when he confidently calculated on an answer. Having carefully re-inspected the communication on the following morning, and finding it still exactly suited to his mind, he consigned it to the post office for the commencement of its mischievous mission.

The preliminary movement being now performed, a period of leisure intervened which he desired to devote to matters not directly connected with his project. The first of these was the removal of the African girl and her child to Philadelphia, and the second, a visit to St. Mary's College, Baltimore, to see his nephew, a boy named Daniel Hurd, the son of his sister, who had been placed there at tuition as early as the year 1838. On the day he intended to go to New-York for the former purpose however, he met in the street a man about his own age, named Child, whom he had known in London, on his first visit to that city. Child, who was an Englishman, explained that he had been obliged to leave his native country in consequence of some unpleasant embarrassments; and that he had arrived about three months before in the United States from Barbadoes, by the way of New Orleans. He was now a resident of Philadelphia, and had been so for nearly three weeks, during which time he had resided at the boarding house of Mrs. Sarah Phillips, 104 South Front street, under the name of *Mr. Nicholas Johnson*. This name, so like the alias of his friend the slaver, at once suggested to Edwards the idea that Mr. Child, alias Mr. Nicholas Johnson, might be very useful to him, and as he knew that gentleman to be a very liberal constructionist of the decalogue, and possessed moreover of a philosophic elasticity of sentiment which approved of

every thing in the way of profit, he did not anticipate any scruples against his immediate conversion to his service. With a great show of warmth, the Colonel invited his transatlantic acquaintance to dine with him at his hotel. Flattered by the compliment, the Englishman readily agreed, and as readily consented at his desire, to enter on the register of the hotel, while unobserved by the person behind the desk, the fictitious name of Hugh S. Hill.

The Englishman at first however, expressed a little surprise at the strange request, but as Edwards explained that his only object was to play a joke upon one of the ladies of the house who daily expected the arrival of a lover of that name, the inquiring glance of his companion changed into a smile, and he made no further hesitation to helping along the fun.

By this adroit manœuvre Edwards took a timely precaution against the danger of having the spurious letter signed Hugh S. Hill, fixed positively on him, by enabling himself to show, by the very register of the hotel, should such a necessity arise, that Mr. Hugh S. Hill was no imaginary personage, but had been an actual resident of the house during his own sojourn within it, and about the time when the fictitious letter was despatched.

From this time, Child and himself were almost constant companions, and by that sort of mutual intuition or instinct common between rogues, the former became aware that the forger had some very important secret enterprise in hand, and the latter, that the Englishman had certain vague, but very discreditable expectations in view. Neither, however, pressed the other sharply for a revelation, for fear of endangering his own concealments. In the intervals of the first few days of their acquaintance, Edwards employed himself in writing several letters to his relations and friends in different parts of the country; extending his correspondence as far as Texas, and concluding it with an epistle to Powell, who he had learned was then in Washington. When these duties were performed, he instituted an examination into his finances, and finding them falling to a threatening ebb, he yielded to the advice of Child, and took rooms with him at the house of Mrs. Phillips. He was the more readily persuaded to this by the information that Mrs. Phillips had two interesting daughters, the youngest of whom, Miss Caroline, was very beautiful, and had been the unattainable

object of the pursuit of a score or more of serious admirers. We will not attempt to give the first degrees of the Colonel's ingratiating with Miss Caroline, but leaving them to be explained by subsequent results, will only now proceed to mark the foot-prints of his plot.

Time ran around till the conclusion of July, when judging that an answer must be due from Maunsell, White & Co., the forger left Philadelphia on the 31st of the month, and went to Baltimore, whither he had requested such answer to be sent. There, in accordance with his expectations, he had the gratification to receive the following letter.

"New Orleans, July 24, 1841.

"H. S. HILL, Esq., Baltimore:

"Sir:—Your much respected favor of the 9th instant, from Philadelphia, is at hand, stating that you and your brother had lately become proprietors of a large cotton estate in Phillips county, Arkansas, and are desirous of forming an engagement in this city for the agency of the same, and that you will not want any advance until your first crop is in hands, nor even then, beyond what is usual for plantation supplies.

"We feel much gratified at the confidence you repose in us, by offering us the agency through the recommendation of our friend, Mr. Gray, of Richmond, and you may rely upon our best exertions for your interest.

"The terms you propose to us, of not requiring any advance, in anticipation of your crops being in hands, is exactly the kind of business we like to do, and we will cheerfully accept of it on those terms. One of our firm (C. Bullitt) is at present in Louisville, Ky., and may remain in the neighborhood for some months; we don't know if it is his intention to go north, but should he do so, it will afford him much pleasure to become personally acquainted with you. We have no particular correspondent in N. York, though we have no doubt our firm is well known there, and should you purchase any articles to be consigned to our care, you will find no difficulty in shipping them through the house of Brown, Brothers & Co., or Prime, Ward & King, or Joshua Clibborn; and many others equally good. At present, there is little or no business doing in our city, and we have only to refer you to the Price Current annexed, for the present state of our market.

With much respect, we remain

Your obedient servants,

MAUNSELL, WHITE & Co."

This precious document ended the forger's anxiety as to the success of his preliminary movements, and he could now by its assistance, devote himself to the direct operations of his scheme.

CHAPTER XX.

Mrs. Powell—the Mysteries of Politics—the Post-office stamps—the Letter of Introduction—the Fictitious Partnership—Declaration of Marriage—Money—Progression of the Machinery.

In commencing this chapter, it is our duty to state, that we neglected in the last to mention that Edwards, on the 28th July, wrote to Winfree, in answer to a begging application from that person for the sum of fifty dollars. The only object of the reply was to prevent the sweater from coming on to Philadelphia to annoy him by his presence and disgrace him by his association. The Colonel, therefore, politely informed Mr. Winfree that he intended to go south that very night, on his way to New Orleans, having been detained so long north only by the continued illness of his nephew, Hurd. "He would stop for a *fiew* days, however, in Prince William county, Va., where his nephew would follow him as soon as he was able." He concluded by saying that he "had no spare money, the provision for 'Miss Kitty,' and Hurd's expenses, having used up his funds to such an extent, that when he should arrive in the Old Dominion, he would be obliged to call upon his friends for the loan of a couple of hundred more." Having thus rebuffed the mercenary sweater, he felt at liberty to proceed to Baltimore and procure the answer of Maunsell, White & Co., to the Hugh S. Hill communication, previously described.

Consigning the letter of the New Orleans firm carefully to his pocket, the Colonel resigned himself to reflection upon the details of his complicated scheme. Unlike an ordinary calculator, he did not content himself with reviewing his enterprise through its regular gradations to the climax, but his reaching thought went far beyond success, and even thus early rummaged the result, and sought to fashion out a special means to cover every portion of his trail. While poising thus the action and its sequel, his old acquaintance, Powell, found a place in the mental panorama that ran between, and it struck him that the strong personal resemblance which that gentleman bore to himself, might be turned to very great account, if the ne-

cessity should arise for him to dispute his identity as the man who received the proceeds of the forgeries. He had once before availed himself of the value of personal resemblances, as between the old gambler and Mr. Dart in the Texan fraud; and this new edition of the same idea, though still crude and undefined, seemed fully worthy of a little trouble; at least of a trip to Washington to obtain the fashion of his quondam friend's outside, that he might copy it. The Colonel felt no scruple in contriving this piece of mischief to his old associate. He had several causes of grievance against Mr. Powell. He owed him a retaliation for palming Winfree on him, to the frustration of his European projects; he had learned, moreover, that he had taken a base advantage of his absence, in a connection of the most delicate nature; but what embittered him the most, and confirmed his indignation into a sly and revengeful hate, was the recent information that the offender had spoken of him, on more than one occasion, not only lightly, but with the most marked disrespect. Under these stimulations, the interval between the conception and adoption of an idea that promised to afford both service and satisfaction, was brief, and the Colonel consequently finished his day's reflections in the evening train of cars, that ran between Baltimore and the Capitol.

The Colonel found the elegant Mr. Powell living in very handsome style on Pennsylvania Avenue, with a very superbly furnished suite of rooms, and a very pretty young mistress whom he represented as his wife. The secret of this state of affairs was, that Mr. Powell had become a politician, and was working out an experiment in political philosophy, the which, though he did not have the singular honor of introducing it in that city, it is due to him to say he has contrived to render very popular there ever since, through the notoriety of his example. He had gone to Washington, in the hope of inducing his relative in the Senate to obtain for him the office of bearer of despatches to the court of St. James, but soon perceiving how weak was consanguinity in matters of State, and how futile every other method of appeal that rested merely on the moral sentiments, he turned on his heel, went to New York, and picking out the prettiest face he could find on reasonable terms, he carried the plump owner of it with him back to Washington, and duly installed her prominently on the Avenue, as Mrs. Powell.

It may be readily supposed, or rather it *will* be at once conceived by those who have had a chance to know of what materials congressmen are made, that the pretty and pliant Mrs. Powell softened many of the obstacles which lay in the way of her *quasi* husband's advancement. Indeed, her amiability so tempered the Massachusetts magnate, that his coldness changed to ardor and his apathy to action, in favor of the household which before, he had treated with such marked neglect. Consanguinity and ties of nature told in her hands with much better effect than in her husband's. At the time of the Colonel's visit, which was August 3d, Powell had the satisfaction of informing his guest that he was at last possessed of the positive promise of the Administration, that he should be the very next bearer of despatches to be sent to England. The forger congratulated the ingenious politician on his prospect of good fortune, and after having exacted the pledge that he would call and see him soon at Philadelphia, he left on the afternoon of the same day of his arrival, and returned home. The Colonel had not failed to remark every item that made up Mr. Powell's personal appearance, and on the following day, his whiskers were fashioned to the same cut as the politician's, and a suit of clothes was ordered of the same fashion.

Being desirous of relieving himself of Child for a few days, that he might undertake some operations which he did not desire him to inspect, he commissioned that gentleman to go to New-York and despatch on Kitty, who had now got well, and for whom and whose child, he had secured comfortable quarters with a genteel colored family in Market-street near Lombard.

By way of a clever practical joke, or experiment in malicious mischief, he at the same time gave the Englishman a letter of introduction to Col. Winfree; but it turned out, that the acquaintance which had been projected by the Colonel as a piece of fun, was swallowed by these two worthies with the greatest gusto, and became a source of congenial gratification to them both.

The Englishman being gone, the forger set about the manufacture of a letter-stamp or post-mark, similar to the one used in the government post-office at New Orleans. The object of this was to give an authentic symbol to the spurious letters he intended to prepare in the name of Messrs. Maunsell, White & Co., so that they might seem to have

come regularly through the mail from the Crescent city. This artifice was a brilliant one. It saved him time, expense, and the danger of an accomplice to drop the letter in at New Orleans, and it left him sole master still, of every move. The task was nice and arduous for one who was no mechanic, but ere the Englishman returned, the counterfeit was done.

The next work was to draw letters of introduction in the name of the great southern house to the principal firms of New-York, a task which he set about as soon as he received some information in relation to them, that he had incidentally commissioned the Englishman to obtain. He then commenced his forgeries, dismissing the fictitious Hugh S. Hill from the stage for ever, and using in its place, the name of John P. Caldwell. The peculiarity of the scheme in this particular was, that Mr. Caldwell, in whose favor the letters to the merchants were to run, was to remain an entirely imaginary character, so far as their presentation was concerned, and the forger was, by the mere power of his mental combinations, to draw the money of these shrewd and keen-sighted men into his very hands. He was not to go and get it. The whole action and performance of the plot was limited to the theatre of his brain, and the money was to be fairly charmed to him as he sat conjuring in his chair, without a single apparent physical appliance to assist his magic. Could he but succeed in the smooth accomplishment of this, the juggler flattered his perverted sense that he would have performed an exploit, which had never been surpassed by human cunning.

The spurious letters in favor of Mr. John P. Caldwell, the "friend" of Maunsell, White & Co., of New Orleans, were six in number, of which, however, we shall particularize but three. These were on the houses of Brown, Brothers & Co., Edward Corrie, and Joshua Clibborn.—The letter to the former of these firms will give an idea of the character of all:

New Orleans, 10th August, 1841.

MESSRS. BROWN, BROTHERS & Co.,

New-York.

GENTLEMEN—Our friend, Mr. John P. Caldwell, now on a visit to Virginia, writes us "that he wishes to command twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars." As the best means of meeting our friend's wishes, we have taken leave to enclose him a letter of introduction to you, with a request that you afford him the facili-

ties he requires, provided you find it convenient, safe, and profitable to yourselves. Mr. Caldwell has in our hand, (subject to no charges,) one thousand and eleven—1,011 bales of cotton, weighing 465,000 lbs., quality averaging "good fair" and worth in the market, at present prices, at least fifty thousand dollars.—This cotton arrived late in the city, and by our advice has been held to sell with the new crop just coming in.

Mr. Caldwell and his family are amongst the very *fiew* planters of this State who are entirely free from debt, and he is a solvent and very wealthy gentleman. The cotton in our hands constitutes the last year's crop, of Mr. C. and his mother, and the whole of it is subject to his orders; therefore any arrangements he may make predicated on the cotton in our hands will be perfectly safe.

If Mr. Caldwell can do no better, he is authorized to value on our house for any sum not exceeding thirty thousand dollars, (at not less than thirty days sight) and his bills shall be duly honored and protected. Should Mr. Caldwell conclude on this course, we shall feel greatly obliged to you if you will procure the negotiation of any bills drawn on our house by him to the above amount.

We shall also be thankful for any attention shown our friend, during his stay in your city.

With much respect,

we remain,

Your ob't serv'ts,

MAUNSELL, WHITE & Co.

Addressed,

Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co.,
New-York."

It is difficult to imagine any thing more ingenious than this letter and its fellows. It is in every way calculated to tempt the imagination of an eager merchant, and to cajole his scrutiny.—The brief, off-hand introduction of Mr. Caldwell at the opening of the letter, as their "friend," is well performed; and the sudden turn to the business of the missive, before finishing the introduction, as would be natural to a writer actuated entirely by the instincts of trade, is not only exceedingly skilful, but shows a profound and master mind. The letter otherwise bears all those little evidences which mark business accuracy; it shows a familiarity with the relative weight and value of the cotton bale; it also shows a knowledge of the then state of the market; and it speaks of the quality of the fabric under consideration, with the

technical flippancy of a thorough-bred business man. In addition to this, it displays a keen and exact knowledge of financial method that is perfectly astonishing, in one who had rusted in a state of semi-vagabondism for the previous two or three years. It contained but one weakness, and that was the mis-spelled word *fiew*, which we have already particularized in the letter to Winfree of the 28th of July. But error is inevitable to perverted cause, and this was the inherent flaw which was destined to betray his scheme, as all which ever had a tortuous begetting, have been betrayed before.

Though we have given the date, address and superscription of the above letter, those items were blank in it, and in all the six, at the time of their production. There were arrangements to be made before they were to be filled in and despatched. It was necessary that the forger, who expected to be suddenly placed in possession of a large amount of money by these frauds, should lay the basis of some evidence, to prove he was the legitimate owner of an equal sum, before the period of their consummation. In his general calculations he had not lost sight of this necessity, and contemporaneous with the preparation of the letters he had drawn a pretended article of partnership (after the fashion of the Dart agreement), between himself and one Charles F. Johnson (the alias of the slaver), the ostensible object of which was, the purchase of negroes in the French West Indies, and their transfer to the more marketable clime of Texas.—Agreeably to these views, the capital stock of this visionary partnership was set down at two hundred thousand dollars, Edwards furnishing for his share, ten and a half leagues, or fifty thousand acres of land, and Charles F. Johnson contributing the sum of *fifty thousand dollars in cash*, and two hundred and fifty negroes, then in Martinique, at the rate of \$250 each. The business of the firm was to be conducted in the name of Edwards, and that he might operate at once, the fifty thousand dollars was to be paid to him in gold and silver, or current bank notes, at the sealing and delivery of the articles. The document contained some minor stipulations to give it plausibility; the principal of which was a condition that Mr. Johnson should be at St. Pierre, in the West Indies, in attendance to the business of the firm, in all the months of January and February following. The object of this clause was to account for

the absence of Mr. Charles F. Johnson, when, in the event of the production of the agreement to the authorities, that illusory gentleman would be found among the missing. It now but remained to have this paper executed in a manner that should complete its *prima facie* validity, and warrant the forger's possession of the funds described. To effect this object, the Colonel made a rapid visit to Baltimore, leaving directions with Mr. Child *alias* Mr. Nicholas Johnson, to follow him the next day to the Eutaw house in the above named city. On the next day Childs called at the Eutaw house, and Edwards having left word at the desk that he expected a visit from Mr. Johnson, of Louisiana, on some highly important business, the Englishman was immediately shown to the Colonel's



EDWARDS AND CHILD PREPARING THE SPURIOUS JOHNSON BOND.

room. It is generally believed that Edwards did not explain to Childs the true design of the agreement which he had brought him there to execute, but whether he did or not, suffice it, he kept him closeted sufficiently long to give color to the supposition, that they had had time to arrange all the details of a large trans- action. They then called in Mr. Elder, the proprietor of the house and Mr. Millon, one of the clerks, when Edwards in their presence, formally executed the instrument on his own part, in his own name, while Child signed it on the other, in the name of "Charles F. Johnson."—Mr. Elder and Mr. Millon, believing all

to be right, then affixed their signatures as witnesses of the due execution and exchange of the articles on that date.

The forger had now an authentic warrant for an early possession of an enormous sum of money; but still there lacked one more ceremony to give the manœuvre a conclusive force. To render all safe, it was requisite that some one *should see the money*, and it was necessary moreover that the witness to this important point, should be simple enough to be deceived, but at the same time strong enough in reputation to be above suspicion. There was a witness of this kind to be found in Philadelphia, in the person of the younger Miss Phillips, whom we have spoken of before. Returning at once, he seized an opportunity when in private with the young lady, to make her a sudden proposal of his hand. After duly declaring his passion, he tempted her with the offer of a settlement of twenty thousand dollars, to be given on the day of the marriage, and then, as if carried away with the vehemence of his determinations, he went to his room and returned with two large packages of money, from one of which he counted on her lap twenty thousand dollars, in denominations of one thousand and five hundred dollar notes. The young lady vacantly stripped the bills through her fingers at her suitor's solicitation, but agitated and bewildered as she was, it was not to be expected that she should be able to observe that they were spurious. While she was thus idly occupied, the Colonel pointed to the other package, and intimated that it contained a yet much larger treasure than in the first, but again added, in conclusion, that what he had counted out upon her lap, should be her own, on the day of their union. The answer to such a declaration from such a man as Edwards, and so well backed up, may be imagined. A family consultation was held at once, to which the Colonel was duly called, after the women had agreed. He was then seriously informed by the widow and the eldest sister, that his proposal would be accepted, on condition that the consent of his mother should be first obtained. Not being able to object to this Quaker proviso, the Colonel gave Miss Lucy his mother's address, accompanied with his permission that she should break the momentous business to the old lady, by letter, in her own way. He cared but little for this female correspondence however, knowing how to circumvent it;

and he cared less for his engagement with the girl, as in event of the success of his plans, he would be in the Brazils with Holcroft long before his perfidy could be made positive against him. His whole object with Miss Caroline had been gained by convincing her of his actual, then, present, possession of some fifty thousand dollars, and thus armed against all serious misadventure, he was at last ready to embark his forgeries to their several destinations. He therefore filled in their dates, so as to make them due in New York, between the 23d and 25th of August, and gave them their several superscriptions and official stamps.

The most difficult portion of his task had now to be performed. This was to get them in the hands of the New York merchants, as if they had come regularly through the Southern mail, an exploit which could not be accomplished by dropping them in the New York post office, as that would subject them to the city stamp, and betray the irregularity of their approach. Nevertheless, they must seem to come through the city post office.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Fraud upon Brown, Brothers & Co.—The Drafts on Baltimore—Reception of the Checks by Edwards—The appearance of the Forger at the Banks to receive the money.

We brought the forger at the conclusion of the last chapter, to that point of his intricate and complicated scheme, where he was ready to step from the circle of preliminary arrangement and precaution, into the grander scope of the cardinal events necessary for the final consummation. We have traced him directly step by step, from the fictitious letter of Hugh S. Hill, of the 9th July, (in answer to which he obtained the signature of Maunsell, White & Co.) to the forgeries on that signature in the shape of financial letters of credit, under date of August 10th, in favor of an imaginary John P. Caldwell, to the most prominent merchants of New-York. Through all these degrees and stages of the plot, we have minutely followed every movement of the master hand, but now, for the first time we must yield to a mystery which has baffled the ingenuity of the police, defied the penetration of counsel, and which now that the contriver is dead, will probably remain unresolved for ever.

This mystery relates to the mode by which the letters, with their counterfeit

New Orleans post marks came regularly to the hands of the merchants to whom they were addressed. They could not, as we have said before, been dropped in over night at the city post office, as that course would have subjected them to a local stamp, which would have betrayed their character. Nevertheless, on the morning of the 23d August, Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., found upon their desk among their morning budget by the Southern Mail, the forged letter of John P. Caldwell, looking as regular as any of the others by its side which had come honestly through the legitimate channels. How it came there, no one has been able satisfactorily to divine.

If this exploit stood by itself, it might be accounted for in various ways—but six letters were received that morning by different parties in the same way—a combination of successful effort that could not have been accomplished, outside of the post-office by any single hand.* What increases the mystery of this matter is, that Edwards himself was not in New-York at the time of their delivery; having set out from Philadelphia that very day for Alexandria, D.C., where he intended to assume the character of J. P. Caldwell, and from that place, and in that name, to write to Brown, Brothers & Co. and the others, for advances to him, on the forged letters of credit under consideration. We are therefore driven to the necessity of concluding, that he entrusted the care of the forged letters to some person in New-York, and that that person, having gained access to the post-office on some specious pretence during business hours, must have seized an opportunity to drop his budget among the heap of letters poured out upon the tables from the bags of the Southern mail. That Edwards was indebted to some such agency is certain, but whether the subordinate accomplice was Winfree or Child, we cannot pretend to conjecture, having already stretched supposition sufficiently, in the main points of our hypothesis.

But to return to the direct current of events. Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co. after bestowing upon the letter the usu-

al degree of business attention, concluded to enter into the operation, with Messrs. Maunsell, White & Co., by making the requisite advance to their friend Mr. Caldwell, provided the New Orleans firm should prove to be as substantial as might be supposed, from the pretensions of their letter. To satisfy themselves of this, they wrote to the firm of Brown & Sons of Baltimore, and receiving answer that Maunsell, White & Co. were a highly respectable firm, and fully sufficient for the operation predicated in the letter, the New-York house replied to the New Orleans establishment, that their wishes in relation to their friend Mr. Caldwell should be duly respected and attended to. No sooner had they done this, than they received from Alexandria, where Edwards had arrived two days before, the following masterly chapter in the fraud:

“ALEXANDRIA, D.C., Aug. 25, 1841.
MESSRS. BROWN, BROTHERS & Co.

Sirs—I am in receipt of a letter dated 10th inst., from Messrs. Maunsell, White & Co., of New Orleans, enclosing a letter of introduction to you, and in which I am informed they have written you to advance me the funds I want, on the security of the cotton in their hands, or to get my bills upon them discounted to the amount of thirty thousand dollars. I should come on in person to New-York, but am prevented from so doing by the dangerous illness of my young brother, who is with me in this neighborhood, and is now lying in a very precarious situation, so ill, indeed, that I cannot leave him for a single day. Thus circumstanced, I herewith hand you my bills of exchange on Messrs. White & Co., for \$26,000 at thirty and sixty days sight, which you will please get discounted at the best rate, and forward the proceeds to me to this place in a bill, or bills upon Richmond. If, however, it would be an object to have the cotton in the hands of Messrs. Maunsell, White & Co. shipped to your agent at Liverpool, that plan would suit me as well, having several times shipped our crops on our own account; and in order that you may avail of it if you like, I also hand you an order on Messrs. White & Co., to be used if you prefer, if you accept this proposition. I want \$25,000 advanced; the cotton can be then shipped, and when sold, the residue of the proceeds can be placed to my credit, and Messrs. White & Co. advised thereof. I want to buy some hands for our plantations here, and am very anxious to send them out immediately, as

* To avoid confusing our narrative with a multiplicity of intricate details, we will confine ourselves principally to the development of the fraud upon Brown, Brothers & Co., which is the counterpart of all the rest. The operations with some of the other firms, may then be incidentally given, in a manner that will afford a clear idea of the scope of the general operation without overburdening the mind with the similar particulars of all.

they may assist in gathering the new crop; 'tis therefore of vast importance to me to close this transaction at once. If suitable bills cannot be had on Richmond, they will answer on Baltimore or Washington, but Richmond would be preferred, as I want to use Virginia funds, and if sound bills cannot be had on either place, then a letter of credit directed to one of the Richmond banks from one of the New-York Banks, I presume will answer. Your early attention to the foregoing will confer on me a very great favor.

I am, gentlemen,

Respectfully your serv't,

JOHN P. CALDWELL."

The above letter contained two \$13,000 drafts, or bills of exchange drawn by Mr. Caldwell upon Maunsell, White & Co., on the fifty thousand dollars worth of cotton in their hands. Without suspecting for an instant the plausible excuse given by the writer for not coming to New York himself; and thoroughly deceived also by his acquaintance with their Liverpool agents and his familiarity with extensive business affairs, Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., immediately acceded to his wishes but cautiously preferring his order on the cotton itself, to the bills of exchange, they set about obtaining the specified sum, in manner according to his request. The difficulty of obtaining the amount of Virginia funds desired by Mr. Caldwell, occupied the remainder of the day; but on the morrow the merchants were enabled to make up the amount and despatch it on to Mr. C. The manner of doing this will be best described by the following letter.

"New York, August 28th, 1841.

Dear Sir:—In acknowledgment of your favor 25th instant, we hasten to apprise you that we prefer making the advance you require upon your 1011 bales of cotton, in the hands of Messrs. Maunsell, White & Co. of New Orleans, to negotiate, at this time, drafts on that place, and we shall therefore, direct said friends in conformity with your order, which we this day transmit to them, together with your bills on them for \$26,000 to ship your cotton to our Liverpool friends, Brown, Shiply & Co., giving us or them timely orders for insurance, and on receiving from them bill lading for the shipment, we shall then value on Liverpool for the amount of our advance, being \$24,505,48, the cost of the enclosed funds amounting to \$25,119,52 as per annexed statement which we hope will be satisfactory. *We feel much indebted to Maun-*

sel, White & Co. for the pleasure of your correspondence, but regret exceedingly, the cause which prevents us from making your personal acquaintance, though we hope still to receive a visit from you on some later occasion. We would suggest your addressing our Liverpool friends through us, with your views as to the disposal of your cotton, and in the meantime remain,

Yours respectfully.

BROWN, BROTHERS & Co."

JOHN P. CALDWELL, Esq.

Alexandria, D. C.

"P. S. We regret we are unable to get so few Virginia funds, but we have cleared the market both for these as well as for Baltimore funds. Of the latter, we could not get \$1000 more, under 1 $\frac{1}{4}$."

This letter contained seventeen checks and certificates of deposit on brokers and on banks of Richmond, Norfolk, Fredricksburg and Petersburg which made up the total of the amount above specified. As the discount and presentation of them will require future reference, we will give the list enclosed in the above letter, which was wrapped around the checks themselves.

Check of City Bank of N. York on Bank of Baltimore.....	\$10,000 00
Check of State Bank of Newark on James Bank, of Va.....	1,000 00
Check on Merchant's Bk. of Richmond..	1,129 92
Check on E. Mickle & Co., of Baltimore	3,305 55
Check on Farmer's Bank of Va.....	1,800 00
Check on Ludlow, Parshall & Co.....	1,600 00
Check on Casco Bank at Fredericksburg	1,224 33
Check on Branch Bank of Va., Petersburg.....	1,086 08
Check on Carter, Mortimer & Co. of Baltimore.....	1,000 00
Check on Farmer's Bank, Va.....	750 00
Check on Bank of Va., Richmond.....	590 00
Check on Johnson & See, Balt.....	494 45
Check on Farmer's Bank of Norfolk...	395 00
Check on Bank of Virginia.....	861 57
Certificate of Dep. on do.....	142 12
Hartford Bank on Farmer's Bank, Richmond.....	155 75
Check on Exchange Bank of Richmond	134 75

\$25,119 52

The letter containing these precious enclosures was sealed and despatched to Mr. Caldwell, on the 28th August. On the same day, Joshua Clibborn replied to Mr. Caldwell, declining his overture as contrary to some recent directions which he had received from his partners in Antwerp, in relation to such transactions. The other houses that had been addressed in the same manner by the forger, declined in similar terms, with the exception of Edward Corrie, who had concluded to enter into the arrangement. On going into the market, however, on the next day, he found it impossible to obtain the kind of money that Mr. Caldwell wanted; Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., having swept the market of Virginia funds, be-

fore him. This occasioned Mr. Corrie a day or two's delay, when reminding himself of the exigencies of Mr. Caldwell's condition, and the necessity of his making an immediate purchase of some slaves to get in the superabundance of his new crop in Arkansas, he drew his check on the Bank of America for \$25,000, and obtaining the sum in \$1000 and \$500 notes on that institution, enclosed them in a letter to the anxious Arkansas planter, with explanation and apologies for his unavoidable delay.

On the 30th August, Edwards, who of course still remained at Alexandria, received the letter of Brown, Brothers & Co., and likewise the letters of declination of Joshua Clibborn and others. There was still another letter due, but not caring to incur the risks usually attendant on delay, he determined to proceed to Baltimore at once and wind up the portion of the plot that lay between him and Brown, Brothers & Co., by cashing the certificates and checks received in their enclosure.

The most difficult portion of the forger's scheme was now to commence. He had got the dangerous gift of checks payable to the order of John P. Caldwell, and his personal qualities were now to be called into direct and open requisition, to encounter and baffle the keen eyes of bankers and brokers, whose stringent scrutiny is invariably directed to all strangers drawing large sums of money. It was a bold measure, but boldly he resolved to undertake it; and accordingly we find him arriving in Baltimore on the morning of the 31st August, by the early southern train, to commence his perilous task.

Finding it too early to proceed to business, the forger, after depositing his baggage, concluded he would take advantage of the opportunity to walk up to St. Mary's College, about a mile from the depot, and pay a visit to his nephew, whom he had so long desired to see. He was disappointed on arriving at the institution, however, at being informed by the Treasurer that his nephew was enjoying vacation at the College farm, about 47 miles distant from the city. Expressing his regrets at this disappointment, the Colonel took his leave, remarking that he was obliged to return to Washington that evening, but he would come back to see the boy on Saturday. It being now time to commence the great business of the day, he went into the Bank of Baltimore, on which he had the \$10,000 check of the New York City

Bank, and asking for the cashier Mr. Jamieson, told him he had a heavy check upon the bank, and inquired if he could give him gold or Virginia funds for it. Mr. Jamieson replied that he would give him either; whereupon the forger, after a moment's pause, said he would first go out among the brokers and see what the rate was, and then return. The object of this visit was merely to show an easy self-possession and a business nicety that should disarm suspicion in advance, and remove all obstacles from the road before he made this heaviest of all his presentations.

Going from the bank, he went to the brokers, Carter, Mortimore & Co., with the \$1000 draft. The clerk behind the desk handed the draft over to Mr. Carter with the remark that it was "all right," but Mr. Carter with more prudence, inquired of Edwards if he was the John P. Caldwell in whose favor it was drawn? The forger said he was; but the broker not yet satisfied with this, told him he must produce a reference or he could not undertake to cash the draft.

The Colonel seemed puzzled for a moment, but he was not a man to be baffled by a mere objection. He informed Mr. Carter that he had large business transactions with Brown, Brothers & Co., and explained them and their urgency, in the same terms as he had presented them to the New York firm, over the signature of John P. Caldwell. The broker, at this, seemed impressed with the forger's manner, and politely informed him if he would show him one of the letters of B. B. & Co., to himself, he would make no further hesitation of his identity. Edwards had with him the letter of Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., but not choosing to show it at that moment, remarked that he would go to the hotel and get it, and with a bow at the conclusion of this expression, he left the office. From thence he went to the office of Johnson and Lee, with \$494.45 draft. Mr. Johnson hesitated about the identity of Mr. Caldwell, in the same manner as Mr. Carter, but, on his clerk, a lad of seventeen named Hanson, telling Mr. J. that the \$494.45 was the exact balance of account existing between them and the New York house by which the draft was drawn, the broker made no further doubt, but paid the draft, Edwards endorsing it over the counter, in the name of John P. Caldwell, without the fluttering of a nerve, in the presence of them both. The amount was paid, at his request, in gold; and the boy after it



Rea & Bro. Del

EDWARDS CASHING THE CHECK ON JOHNSON & LEE. BALTIMORE.

was counted out put it in a *shot-bag*, that he might carry it conveniently with him. This bag was stamped with the sign of the firm "*J. & Lee.*" Conveying this immediately to the hotel where he had temporarily left his baggage on arrival, he consigned it to his trunk, and returned to the office of Carter, Mortimore & Co. The display to Mr. Carter of the letter of the New York firm satisfied that gentleman's scruples at once, and the \$1000 order on his house was paid.

The next collections which he made were those of the \$3305.55 draft on E. Mickle & Co., and the \$1600 draft on Ludlow, Parshall & Co. In both of these cases he was subjected to the same difficulties in relation to identification as before; but by dint of the well represented hardships he would suffer, if forced to go back to Washington to get a member of Congress to return with him, and well-timed display of Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co's letter, he overcame them all.

An hour had now elapsed since his first visit to the Bank of Baltimore, and that remained the last place he had to visit to conclude his business in that city. The cashier was engaged at the moment of his entering the bank, so proceeding directly to the paying teller, he handed him the \$10,000 check. The teller looked at the check, and then at the person who presented it, but though he recognized the paper as genuine, he refused to cash it until the forger could prove himself to be the John P. Caldwell in whose favor it was drawn. Edwards affected the utmost chagrin at this requirement, and turning to the cashier, explained to him that being a stranger, it would scarcely be possible to fall in with any person there who knew him; that he was anxious to leave town that evening, but that if they insisted so strictly with him, he would be obliged to go to Washington and return with some member of Congress who knew him; a measure of delay which would deprive him of the chance of a most advantageous purchase of some slaves; to complete which promptly, was the very reason he had procured the check from his agents in New York.

The cashier seemed to agree with Mr. Caldwell upon the hardship of his case, but firmly remarked that they could not be expected to break a vital business rule, on the strength of any contingent

circumstances whatever. At this the forger turned towards the door, but pausing of a sudden, as if struck with a fortunate idea, he remarked that he had transactions with Brown, Brothers & Co. of New York, and inquired if they had not agents or a branch in Baltimore? The cashier replied that they had, and added that if he could but induce Mr. Brown of the firm of Alexander Brown & Sons to call back with him, and say that it was all right, the money would be cheerfully paid.

The forger had now a new act to perform, but nothing daunted at the seeming accumulation of difficulties, he went directly to the house of Messrs. Brown & Sons, and introduced himself to the principal member of the firm. Immediately upon this introduction, Mr. Brown willingly recognized in the gentlemanly stranger, the Mr. John P. Caldwell of whom his connections in New York had written, and who was such a particular friend of the highly respectable house of Messrs. Maunsel, White & Co. of New Orleans. With consummate address the forger then laid open his case, and upon the hearing of it, Mr. Brown, without hesitation, took his hat to return with him to the bank. He did not wish to see the friend of Maunsel, White & Co. defeated of the means to get in his enormously superabundant crop of cotton in Arkansas—especially when it was likely that the proceeds of that crop, would, like the last, inure to the benefit of his friends, either in New York or New Orleans.

By this ingenious boldness did the accomplished manager overcome what to most other men would have been an insuperable obstacle, and render subsidiary to his service, the very persons whom it seemed necessary to him most sedulously to avoid.

With the collection of the \$10,000 check, the business of the swindler was done in Baltimore. He had changed 16,000 dollars worth of his remittances into cash, but there still remained on his hands eight thousand more, to be disposed of in the city of Richmond. Congratulating himself upon his success, as he stowed the gold and notes away in the secret apartment of his trunk, he prepared to take the afternoon train for the South, to commence the immediate performance of the second portion of his perilous task, in the capital of Virginia.

CHAPTER XXII.

Cashing the Drafts in Richmond—Discovery of the Forgery—Consternation and confusion—Movements of the officers—Twenty thousand dollars reward for the Great Forger—Arrest of Powell.

Our last chapter ended with the conclusion of the forger's task in Baltimore, from which place, having cashed all his drafts upon it to the amount of \$16,000, he was now rushing with railroad speed to Richmond, to discount and turn to cash the remaining \$9,000 worth of paper, upon the financial establishments of that city.

The haste of his movements, the extraordinary difficulties which he had overcome, and the host of dangers which he had yet to compass, did not in the least perturb the forger's mind, but leaning back in the cars he resigned himself at once to sleep, as soundly as though he were accepting the grateful boon of Nature for an honest toil, that did not call upon conscience for a single throe to disturb the smooth surface of his complacent soul.

He woke refreshed in body and in mind, and when, on the following morning he paced the deck of the boat that bore him down the Potomac, he serenely reviewed the past, and without agitation or mistrust took the measure of the future. In his broad and strongly balanced mind there was no confusion, no hesitation, no perplexity. Every movement in his apparently involved and really elaborate plot fell in its place with systematic order, and as the machinery progressed, no stop nor key was overlooked. He reflected that his collections of the day before must necessarily become immediately known to Brown, Brothers & Co., through Brown and Sons of Baltimore, and also by the advices which the various brokers of Baltimore would, in the course of business, transmit to their agents in New York. It was necessary, therefore, that as a business man, he should appear equally prompt, and by an immediate acknowledgement to the New York firm, of the receipt of their letter of the 28th, retrieve the postponement of that duty which, until he had tested success, he had purposely delayed. In this temporary postponement he had been wise, but there was now no further need of delay; nay, it was necessary that he should hurry upon the heels of his politic pause, and keep up the routine of his plot, that the veil of the delusion which he had so cunningly hung between him and his

dupes, might not be torn in two, or even disturbed before its proper time. With this purpose, he went into the captain's office of the boat and prepared the following letter:

"MESSRS. BROWN, BROTHERS & Co., N. Y.,
Fredericksburg, Va., 1st Sept. 1841.

SIRS:—Your favor of the 28th ultimo came duly to hand, containing checks, &c., to the amount of (\$25,119.52) twenty-five thousand one hundred and nineteen, 52 100-dollars, Virginia and Baltimore funds. I was at Balt. yesterday, and am now on my way to Richmond, to arrange my business there. My poor brother is still in a very precarious situation, and I can only leave him for a few hours at a time. The facilities you have afforded me will enable me to save several hundred bales of cotton, as we had planted very large crops that we could not have saved without this timely aid.

I have written Messrs. White, &c., instructing them to promote your desire in regard to the cotton without delay.

Also, in compliance with your suggestion, I enclose a letter to your house at L.pool in regard to the same, which you will please forward.

I am, respectfully,

Sirs, your obed't serv't,
"JNO. P. CALDWELL."

This letter contained an enclosure equally ingeniously worded with the above, directed to the Liverpool branch of Brown, Brothers & Co's establishment, and giving minute directions to those transatlantic gentlemen, as to the best mode of bringing the cotton into market on its coming to their hands. These two papers were the last the forger felt called upon to address to the New York firm which had been so kind to him. Their transactions with each other now seemed plainly at an end, and as the forger folded up and superscribed the final missive which he intended to direct them, he almost felt inclined to give it a parting salute, as the last of a progeny to which he was infinitely grateful.

It is hardly necessary to say that during his temporary stay in Fredericksburg, between the arrival of one and the departure of another train of cars, he deposited this letter in the post-office at that place with his own hand.

Taking the afternoon train of cars, which was the next that offered for the continuation of his journey south, the forger arrived in Richmond at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 o'clock on the night of the 1st September, and proceeded with his baggage to

the Washington Hotel at that place. He was received by Mr. John L. Clendenning, formerly a book-keeper in the house, but now proprietor. It was the first day of Mr. Clendenning's *regime*, so he had opened new books, and consequently turned over the virgin leaf of a fresh register for this his first customer to enter in his name. Edwards took the pen, and at the head of the page, after a flourish or two, wrote in the serviceable synonym of "John P. Caldwell, La."

In the morning after breakfast, he came sauntering into the office, and after picking his teeth for a few minutes, and swinging up and down with a nonchalant air, he carelessly inquired of Clendenning where he could find the banks? Receiving the reply that they were in Main street, he lounged off towards the glass, and adjusting his cravat afresh, and tenderly coaxing forward his handsome whiskers, then but half grown and shorn of their usual Eden beneath his chin, he sallied out.

He went first to the Farmers' Bank of Virginia, on which he had checks to the amount of \$4,330.26, and had the good fortune to accomplish his object with but very little difficulty. His next essay, on the Bank of Virginia where he had checks for \$1,093.69 was equally successful; and so likewise were the presentations of the \$1,129.92 draft on the Merchant's, and the \$134.75 check on the Exchange Banks of Richmond. None of these banks, however, would cash the remaining checks on Petersburg, Norfolk and Fredericksburg, and the wearied forger sunk for a moment under the prospect of the annoyances and the delays of new prospective fields of action. This was the first downright and positive difficulty he had met with from the commencement of his operations; but blank as it looked, he soon found a way by which it could be turned. The rejected paper consisted of something over three thousand dollars, and it was divided into several small checks collectable at different places. It was not surprising that he should shrink at the prospect of going through all of these in detail; besides, he wished to return at once to Alexandria, to receive the reply of Edward Corrie of New York, which he had a presentiment would be favorable.

Wilting under the perspiration which had been aggravated considerably by his last disappointment, he turned into the shade in Main street, and after wiping

his profuse forehead two or three times, and drawing his cravat from sweltering contact with his throat, he looked around vacantly, as men will do when undecided which way to turn to unthread a puzzle. While thus foraging the atmosphere, his eyes met the sign of J. W. Maury & Co., and reminding himself that he had heard it was a very extensive and wealthy establishment, he made for the door at once, actuated by the idea, that there, perhaps, he might make for his remaining checks a negotiation in the lump.

He found Mr. Robt. H. Maury in the office, but that gentleman being slightly indisposed, did not undertake the stranger's business, but invited him to sit down till his partner Mr. Parsell should come in. The forger at once gracefully acquiesced, and while he fanned himself with a handkerchief redolent with perfume, related the whole Caldwell story to the admiring broker. He described the urgency of his transactions with Brown, Brothers & Co., and explained that the \$25,000 which he had obtained from them on his cotton, was to be applied to the immediate purchase of slaves in Alexandria on the following day, to get in a large crop on his plantation in Arkansas. Nearly an hour elapsed in this way before Mr. Parsell came in; when Mr. Maury, upon whom the handsome and gentlemanly stranger had made a decidedly favourable impression, explained the application, and while his hand, or rather his tongue was in, added the urgency of the stranger's business necessities as an excuse for his desiring to negotiate the paper at once in Richmond. After things had been put in this shape, all was plain sailing, and a lapse of ten minutes more found Col. Monroe Edwards rid of all his drafts and checks, and the possessor instead, of Virginia money for all that he had brought to Richmond.

Thus was finished up the Brown, Brothers & Co. business. The Colonel drew a long breath of relief as he stepped out of the broker's office into the street, and disdaining to walk any further, he waved his hand to a coach and drove to his hotel. We will not pretend to imagine his reflections or describe his satisfaction as he stowed the last fruits of his harvest away in his now richly laden trunk. It is sufficient to say that having locked it carefully, he threw himself upon his bed, and exhausted by the extraordinary fatigues of the two previous days fell off to sleep.

The dinner bell awoke him too late to prosecute his journey north again, so he was fain to remain until the following morning, when taking the early train at five o'clock, he arrived at Alexandria in the latter part of the day. There to his joy he found the Corrie letter, and on bursting its imposing seal apart, he discovered twenty-five \$1000 notes on the Bank of America at New York, one note of \$500, and another still of \$100, on the same institution, making in all twenty-five thousand six hundred dollars.

The work was done. From the brink of poverty he was again in the environs of fortune, and the magic had been worked solely by his own head and hand. He had used subordinate agents for letter carrying and other small work it was true, but they were neither confidants nor accomplices, so he had neither to dread the imprudence of the one, nor reckon with the claims of the other. He was equally the inventor and the performer, and as he laid his head upon his pillow that night—the pillow under which lay his money and his pistol—he chuckled within himself that he was secure from discovery or betrayal, until he chose to betray himself.

He reckoned vainly and blindly, as crime always reckons. He had, however, achieved enough to make him vain, and perhaps the only excuse we can find for his excess of that weakness, is in the fact that he had more genius to justify it, than usually falls to the lot of one man in ten thousand.

On the following morning the Colonel went to Washington, and there called again upon his old acquaintance, Mr. Powell. In the course of his conversation with that virtuous personage he did not consider it necessary to conceal his exultation at the recent good fortune which had befallen him, though he thought fit to describe it as a West India speculation, of which he had just received the first news and first instalment. The sordid place-hunter opened his eyes with greedy admiration as Edwards, forgetting his usual prudence, displayed to him in a handful of gold and notes, some of the avails of his plunder; and Mrs. Powell equally struck, administered the Colonel a sly pinch, followed by an oblique ogle so flattering, that he could not refrain, in the generosity of his heart, from handing over to that exemplary lady a hundred dollar note, just by way of treating her to a new shawl. It may be conceived that the lady duly appreciated this compliment; and our readers who know the

Colonel, are aware that his politeness was of too refined a character to attempt to restrain her from displaying her gratitude in any way that seemed pleasant to herself.

Powell had a message to perform at one of the departments, in which jaunt the Colonel did not care to accompany him. When he came back however, which was after the lapse of half an hour, Edwards accompanied him in a stroll across the bridge, and after a long walk and a rambling conversation, he pressed upon him the sum of three hundred dollars. Powell took the money without much hesitation, mumbling something about considering it as a loan, but winding up with a much more audible promise to call at Philadelphia in a few days, sure.

During this interview, Edwards observed with satisfaction, that his sometime friend still wore the same style of dress which he had himself adopted for the presentation of his forgeries.

The forger took his leave of the exemplary Mr. and Mrs. Powell that afternoon, receiving a very ardent pressure of the hand from the first, and a very peculiar smile and something that looked like a very confidential wink from the second, as he bowed his adieus before going to the rail-road station.

He was right welcome back to Philadelphia; chiefly, however, to the gentle young girl who had bound her fancy to his image with so strong a lease. Child also had eagerly counted the days, for he was agitated with conjectures that almost burst him with impatience. The maternal anxieties of the widow too, were on the alert to construe the continued absence as little unfavorably to the attachment to her youngest daughter as possible; while the sober sister who kept the books, and who is very likely to appear to the reader as forever walking with a pen behind her ear, was measurably satisfied, to find the gallant returning without a broken limb or a changed complexion.

In the enjoyment and relaxation which succeeded the Colonel's return for the first day, it seemed as if he had completed his task for good, baffled the nose of scrutiny, and had nothing more to do but enjoy himself on the proceeds of his ingenuity and labors with the same independence of public observation and remark, as if he had been their honest and legitimate heir.

He checked himself, however, suddenly in these dreams of joy, and wisely

called to mind that his work was not yet quite over. He had in his possession the dangerous evidences which he had procured from the Corrie letter and the southern banks, and it was of the last importance that these notes, every one of which, if found upon him, might be identified by the various bankers and brokers of Baltimore and Richmond as the money paid to John P. Caldwell, should be changed into gold, or into the notes of other banks. Posting off to New-York, therefore, on the afternoon of the 6th he commenced this latter portion of his enterprise in that city on the following day.

The selection of the market was shrewdly made, for he had good reason to know that there ought to be a demand in it for Virginia funds, and at a most favorable rate. In two days he turned some five or six thousand dollars of the Virginia notes into gold, and succeeded in changing off seventeen thousand dollars of the bills on the Bank of America into the notes of other New-York city banks.

These being at par, were equally as available as gold, and being more portable, were less likely to excite suspicion against his trunks. On the 8th he purchased a bill of exchange, on Prime, Ward & King, drawn on Baring, Brothers & Co., of London, for £255 5s. This was the amount of the sum he had borrowed from Earl Spencer when in London, and his object was now to send it back. Ever since the date of leaving England he had keenly reproached himself with the mean return which he had made to the numerous favors of that generous nobleman, and now he seized the first moment that was offered him to make the only reparation in his power—pecuniary restitution. Having despatched this draft, with an apologetic letter by a packet that sailed on the day of its purchase, the Colonel returned to Philadelphia.

There he set Child to work with some small commissions in relation to Kitty's welfare, &c., and delivered himself up to absolute relaxation from any further care. Indeed, he became so deluded with the idea of his perfect safety from suspicion, that he did not even take the precaution to destroy the false stamps with which he had made the forged post marks on the spurious letters, the colored inks, or the tell-tale shot-bag, stamped with the initials of the firm of Johnson & Lee, which had been handed to the pretended John P. Caldwell, by the boy Hanson, in Baltimore, on the 31st of August.

They seemed to be safe enough where his money seemed safe—at the bottom of his iron bound trunk; but if suspicion should once fall upon him, their possession would be terrible—but he seemed to have entirely overlooked that view of the matter.

While things were in this condition, Powell came to Philadelphia to pay his elegant and fashionable friend a visit. He too had been fortunate, and was in a fair way of political advancement; not indeed by virtue of his personal qualities, or by the operation of his head, like the Colonel; but by the very antithetic exertions of the lovely Mrs. Powell, who it seems never slept, nay, never even winked when the welfare of her lover required a movement on her part.

Mr. Powell informed his friend the Colonel, that at last his prospects were confirmed. He was to be made the bearer of the commission of Mr. Everett to the court of St. James, and he had a reliable promise, moreover, that his mission would be extended to carrying despatches also to the court of Paris.

"Well, that looks like doing something," said Edwards, really struck with the brilliant grab which his fellow adventurer had made from the pouch of patronage. "Truly, Powell, you are a man to be envied."

The Colonel sincerely meant what he said, for as rapidly as thought it flashed through his mind how much *he* could achieve on the basis of such a position. His next thought was, that Julia Powell was an invaluable woman.

Powell had received a replenishment to his finances moreover, so the Colonel concealing for the time his contempt for the man who had once betrayed his confidence and meanly sowed the seeds of evil in his shadow, became for the few days that Powell stayed at Philadelphia, his constant and apparently attached companion. At length having made a great show, and spent the most of his available means, Powell was obliged to leave for Boston to make preparations to go to England in the steamer of the 25th September; therefore borrowing two hundred dollars more from the Colonel, on the same understanding as the previous three hundred, he bade the forger good bye, and promised to write to him immediately on his arrival in Europe, provided he did not see him again before his departure.

In the meantime, Maunsell, White & Co. of New Orleans, in whose name the forgeries had been perpetrated, had re-

ceived Brown, Brothers & Co's letter of the 28th Aug., enclosing the two forged drafts upon them for \$13,000 each in the name of their pretended friend, Mr. John P. Caldwell, and also his order that the cotton in their hands from his estate in Arkansas, be shipped to the agents of Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., in Liverpool, in lieu of the advances which the New-York house had made to him (Caldwell) on their account. This letter and its enclosures, of course, excited the most unbounded surprise in the minds of the New Orleans merchants, who had never before heard of such a person as Mr. John P. Caldwell, and taking counsel at once, they soon concluded that the New-York firm had been made the victim of some bold and daring swindler who had successfully counterfeited their name. The reception of a letter the same day from Joshua Clibborn, advising them that he had been similarly applied to by their friend, Mr. Caldwell, and had declined the business, only "as contrary to the express wish of his partners at Antwerp on that head," confirmed them in this opinion, and they immediately wrote back to Brown, Brothers & Co., returning them the two drafts regularly protested for non-acceptance, and expressing a hope that those gentlemen might be enabled to apprehend the rascal who had defrauded them, and recover the amount in his possession.

The letter containing this astounding information, reached Messrs. Brown Brothers & Co., on the 17th September, about the time of Powell's departure from Philadelphia for Boston. As may be supposed, it created the utmost consternation in the minds of the plundered firm. The fraud which had so completely deluded them, now stood revealed in all its nakedness before their eyes, and in the first sharp moment of conviction, they wondered, that at the time, they had not felt a single misgiving at Caldwell's plausible representations of the illness of his nephew, to excuse his appearing to them in person. But regrets and repinings were now of no use. Their money was gone, and they must take immediate measures to ferret out the swindler and recover it if possible. But how were they to begin: they were without a clue, and absolutely in the dark.

When men are confounded with a mystery beyond their comprehension, they usually seek relief and advice from powers of which they know still less. The Browns, consequently, applied to some necroman-

cers of the police for counsel and assistance. These persons on being called in, looked very grave as became them, and as the agitated merchants told their story, they frowned now and then wisely at each other, and occasionally inter-telegraphed a little more decidedly, by accompanying those visual exchanges, with slight but very impressive nods of the head. When the merchants had finished their relation, the officers said not a word. They were very faithful, and also very intelligent servants of the public, but under a fee system could not be expected to think for nothing. The merchants did not wish them to, and by a sort of instinct, they broke upon the professional pause, with a promise to give them \$5,000 if they apprehended the rogue and got them their money.—The officers then began to talk, and by way of securing the business and its profits entirely to themselves, as is the rule always with such public spirited worthies, they solemnly conjured the merchants not to say a word about the matter to a soul for the present, and they would "do up" the business in the course of a few days. Encouraged by the flattering inuendoes and confident nods and winks of these felt-footed augurs, the merchants regained their composure, and with a clearness of mind common to men of their class, began themselves to lay out the combinations for the forger's detection. They suggested an immediate correspondence with all the brokers and bankers to whom the pretended Caldwell had presented himself in Baltimore and in Richmond, and advised a visit on the part of the officers, to the Postmasters at Alexandria, and at Fredericksburg, and the hotel keepers, as well of those two places, as of Baltimore and Richmond. The main object was to see if the rascal could not be traced in his course from any of these places.

Unconsciously, by these half timid suggestions the merchants gave direction to the inferior minds that listened to them, receiving in exchange nothing from the officials, but the false advice to withhold the business from the public. Fortunately however, and to the great dismay of the taciturn speculators, the *New York Herald* of the following day, published a full account of the forgery, in its advices from New Orleans, and thus defeated the false and selfish system of the officers, by putting the scrutiny of the entire public in requisition, and engaging every individual in the community, to hunt the forger down.

The rascal who otherwise might have been secure in the precautions which crime naturally seeks for its protection, had now to expect danger from the glance of every eye.

The great forgery became at once the prominent theme of the newspapers, and the gossip of all circles; furnishing curious entertainment to the largest coteries, but carrying unqualified consternation throughout the commercial circles. The mysterious operator was entitled the Napoleon of financiers, and one paper, in an involuntary admiration for the great talents he had unquestionably displayed, advised that he should be made the President of the new National Bank then in agitation. The speculations in relation to him were various, but all agreed that he was the head of an extensive gang, and that this gang was the same, which had committed the extraordinary forgeries on the Girard Bank, Jacob Little and others in the previous Spring, heretofore described by us at the commencement of the 19th chapter, as the very exploits which gave Edwards the idea of his frauds.

With a liberal advance to aid them in their excursion, the officers who had been specially engaged by Brown, Brothers & Co., ran through Pennsylvania, Maryland and into Virginia as far as Richmond; returning after the lapse of several days, to New York with just the same amount of information as the merchants had themselves collected by their correspondence; *i. e.* the personal description of the forger. Not being able to do any thing more, they contented themselves with advising the merchants to double the reward; a prudent thought, for notwithstanding the business looked absolutely hopeless, it was undoubtedly judicious to enhance their chances in case of success. The despairing merchants yielded to this advice and doubled their offer; while Edward Corrie, equally a victim with themselves, contributed a like amount to the tempting proclamation. The reward now stood at—“*Twenty thousand dollars for the arrest of the great forger!*”

While things were in this gloomy state, the Messrs. Brown received one

morning an anonymous letter, in a disguised hand, informing them that Alexander Powell, who *had* embarked at Boston in the steamer for England, was the man they were in search for. Hard upon this note and in connection with the news of the unexpected detention at Boston of the vessel in which Powell was to have sailed, came another letter in the same hand, speaking more doubtfully in relation to Powell and cautioning the merchants, that as he was a man of good family and high connections, it would be necessary for them to proceed with the utmost circumspection, in charging such a crime upon him.

There was something significant in the change of tone of the writer, now that it appeared that the subject of the communication was actually within reach again; and it immediately struck the Messrs. Browns that the secret correspondent was an accomplice of Powell's, who, though he desired to screen himself by throwing all the blame upon an absent man, now dreaded Powell's arrest, for fear that it would involve disclosures in relation to himself.

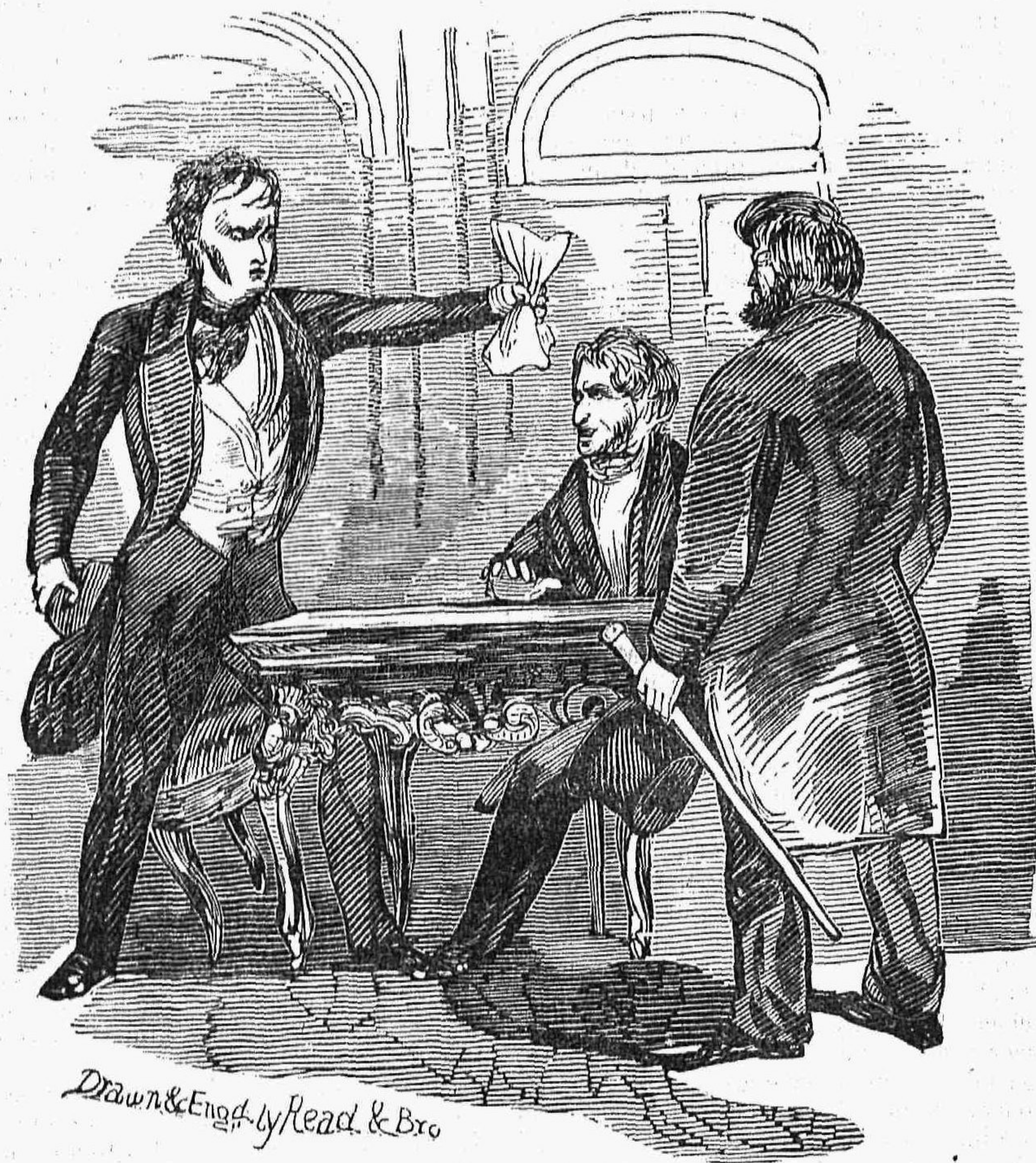
The officers of course took the same view of the subject, and starting East post haste under directions of the merchants, they apprehended Mr. Powell on the very morning when the delayed vessel, was about to resume her start.

The bearer of despatches was for a time indignant to no purpose, but on calling in the assistance of his friends, and representing to the officers the honorable relations he bore to the Government, they relaxed their determination and condescended, (partly in the hope to induce him to betray the accomplice who had betrayed him) to show him the letters which had been received by Brown, Brothers & Co. charging him with the forgery.

Powell was struck aghast when he beheld the treacherous missives. He could scarcely believe his eyes. His lips turned white with rage, and suddenly fronting upon the officers he exclaimed, in a voice shrill with passion—“Do you wish to know who the great forger is?”

“We do!”

“Well then, it is Monroe Edwards!”



ARREST OF POWELL AS THE SUPPOSED GREAT FORGER.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Tender Reflections—Provision for Kitty—The Pocket full of Rocks—Return of the Officers from Boston—Their Arrival in Philadelphia—Arrest of the Great Forger—Treachery of Johnson—The Fatal Stamps.

After Powell had left Philadelphia, Edwards began to direct his attention to the subject of his own departure South.

Now that he had accomplished the main object which induced him to part with Holcroft at Paris and take the United States in his route to the West Indies, there was nothing to detain him any longer on the way, but the necessary courtesies of excuse and leave-taking which duty as well as decorum required towards the confiding maiden to whom he had pledged his troth.

Upon consulting his bosom, the Colonel found these duties to be as imperative upon his heart, as they were upon his sense of politeness and good breeding; and when to the force of these two sentiments, natural and artificial, was added the impulse of that refined conceit which craves for female recollection, though never to be turned to practical account, we may conceive at once the weight of the combined inducement which kept the lover apparently trifling away his time in Philadelphia, when the operation of his vaster projects, and perhaps his safety, required him to be on his rapid circuit to St. Piere.

Indeed, the careless admiration with which the Colonel had at first regarded Miss Caroline for her personal attractions, had taken rather a graver tone. Under the suasion of her warmer throes, he was led insensibly a few degrees into reciprocation, and before he thought of analyzing himself upon the subject, he found that the chrysalis of his original fancy had ripened into a very tender esteem. Beyond this point of development, one so baked with worldliness and glozed over with self love probably could not go. As for the maiden, she had resigned herself absolutely to a dream—given herself up to that sort of vague, but gentle frenzy which makes the head swim, and the bosom yearn with a pleasurable sickness, which lovers, who have been stirred with it to their diaphragms, understand so much better than we.

It was this delightful fermentation of the sentiments between the pair, which, as much as any sense of propriety kept the Colonel lingering in the North, and

it was the young lady's share of it, which gave impulse to all those little arts of tenderness that, without intending it, wove the fatal meshes round his prudent will, and insensibly bound him as a sacrifice to its own retribution.

Miss Caroline was not however, the only subject of the Colonel's warm concern. He had not forgotten the descendant of the Foulah princess, nor her long and tried attachment to his person; and as he occupied himself with recollections of the desperate service she had performed for him when he was a prisoner in Texas, the devotion she had evinced, when, as a fugitive, he was glad to skulk with her through the chapparal to save his life from popular fury or the gallows, and the unvarying fidelity to his faintest wish even to that time, he resolved to devote a portion of his gains, now that he was about to leave her perhaps for ever, to establishing her comfort on a basis above the perils of poverty. While the generous fit was on, he thought also of his kind old mother, and mentally resolved to devote a large portion of his funds to the purchase for her of a fine estate, before embarking again upon the unknown sea of speculation.

As an illustration of the spirit which actuated him at this time, and of the high hopes which he had formed of the success of his future plans, we give the following extract from a letter written to a Southern friend on the 24th September:

“PHILA., 24th Sept., 1841.

“DEAR HARRY—

“ * * * *. In regard to going South, I shall leave here on the 30th. I am in town with a pocket full of rocks, as I have now at my command, in cash, \$46,000. I shall now proceed to Louisiana, where my first object will be to purchase a first rate estate for my good mother, upon which I shall probably have to pay down, fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. That done, I proceed to the West Indies, where I have a speculation on foot, that if I am not mistaken will give me \$500,000 sure. You know I am a “whole hog” man, and am not to be stopped at trifles. I intend to make a noise in the world yet. I am in a fair way to do as I please, and you may be sure that with the experience of the past, I will make sure of the future. My star is in the ascendant, and I will go ahead, exas and Hell to the contrary notwithstanding!” I remain, as ever,

“Your friend,

“MONROE.”

It was after this letter was despatched, but on the same day, that the Colonel learned, through the Philadelphia evening papers, that his forgeries in the name of Maunsell, White & Co., had been discovered. Though prepared for it, the announcement nevertheless made an unpleasant tingling through his nerves, but he was restored to his equanimity at once, by the good joke of being regarded as the head of a gang of forgers, and identical with the principal of the cunning financiers who had so adroitly tapped the banks and brokers in the spring.

The report served to arouse him from his indolence, and he determined on immediate preparations to leave a neighborhood, which he plainly saw from the character of the first impression which the forgeries had made upon the public mind, would soon become dangerous to him.

Hoping to turn the excitement in a direction from the one in which he intended to fly, he the next morning wrote the first anonymous letter received by Brown, Brothers & Co., informing them that Alexander Powell, who had sailed in the Great Western from Boston that very day, (September 25th,) was the veritable John P. Caldwell whom they were in search of. His dismay may be imagined, however, when on the day following the dispatch of this vile epistle, the papers announced that the Great Western, through an unlooked for need of some repairs, would not be able to sail on her regular day;—would not perhaps get off before the 1st. The forger almost trembled when he rapidly calculated the results which might flow from the false hint that he had given, if the merchants should resolve to act upon it, and in the hope to retrieve the error, he wrote the second anonymous letter already noticed, cautioning the merchants to be careful how they charged such a crime as that in question against the name of Powell, as it was highly respectable and extremely well connected throughout Massachusetts. Trusting this latter missive to the post, he set at once about making final preparations for his departure.—He acquainted the family of his betrothed with his intention to leave on Friday, the third day following, and by dint of most plausible excuses of business, and strong promises of quick return, satisfied them of the necessity of the proposed departure.

He next called on Kitty, and soothing her disappointment with a liberal sum, to take care of her during his absence,

he comforted her yet further with a promise to be back in three or four months at most. He made this statement to excuse the extent of the amount he gave her, and he knew if he attempted to give her more, she would suspect the measure of his intentions and afflict herself with unnecessary grief. He did not intend to make this motive an excuse for injustice to the poor faithful creature, however, therefore on returning to his lodgings that afternoon, he handed Child five hundred dollars in gold to deposit in one of the banks to Kitty's credit, and to be drawn by her after her private stock ran out, in instalments of five dollars a week for two years.

On the evening previous to his intended start, he was informed by Child that he had endeavored to make the deposit on the terms required in vain, none of the banks being willing to incur the trouble of such conditions, for so small a sum. Upon this, Edwards, with a considerable show of annoyance, named several institutions at which the Englishman had not called, whereupon the latter promised to try again the following day. Thus delayed Edwards remained till Saturday, for he would not move until he knew that the deposit had properly been made, and Kitty introduced as the person to whose credit it was due. On Saturday again, a further disappointment in the matter condemned him to postpone his departure till the following (Sunday) morning.

The evening which was to be his last in Philadelphia, it was his duty to devote to the Phillips family, consequently, when the tea-table was disposed of, he gave Miss Caroline his arm and leading her to a centre table in the front room, sat her down as his partner in a game of whist.

In the meantime, the officers who went to Boston after Powell, had had an opportunity to converse at length with that gentleman, and to ascertain from him not only many of the recent movements of Monroe Edwards, but to obtain various particulars of his former life, which tended to show that the Colonel was of a character very apt for the performance of just such an exploit as was then attributed to him. The place-hunter described the Texan's connection with Kitty, and indicated where she could be found; he imparted his suspicions, likewise, that Mr. Nicholas F. Johnson, whom they would find boarding at Mrs. Phillips, was an accomplice of the forger, and he further acquainted them that they could ascer-

tain to their perfect satisfaction, even in New York, that Edwards was the forger, by calling on Lewis Tappan, and getting from him, in addition to his personal description of the Texan, several letters of the latter, which, on comparison with the forgeries of Caldwell, would prove him and the Arkansas planter to be one and the same man. In the course of this consultation, Powell ascertained the enormous reward that was offered for the forger's apprehension, and being seized thereupon with a desire to make a harvest out of his revenge, he inwardly resolved that it would be worth his while to go back to New York himself, and make terms in person with the merchants, for the services he intended to render in their enemy's arrest. In a moment his revenge lost all its dignity, and fell to the level of a mere sordid filthy spite. It was capable, before, of leading the officers to Edwards' very door and boldly pointing him out; but now, debased of its pith by penurious motives, its mean spirit could crawl only in the shade and do its miserable office like an assassin.

The officers heard with pleasure Powell's declaration that he would go back with them to New-York, for they doubted the propriety of letting one go who seemed to know enough of the forger to have been his accomplice, yet whom they could show no warrant to arrest. The voluntary offer of the politician, therefore cured all these official anxieties, and after Powell had transferred his European charge to a highly respectable elderly gentleman of Boston, who was going out in the steamer, he returned with the officers to New-York.

Under direction of Powell (though that gentleman remained perdue) the officers went to Lewis Tappan, and from that gentleman's description of Monroe Edwards, and a comparison of his letters with the forgeries of Caldwell, all doubts of the correctness of Powell's information were settled. On the following morning the officers, accompanied by Edward Corrie, set out in the 9 o'clock train for Philadelphia. It was the day which the Colonel had resolved, as we have seen, should be the last of his stay in the Quaker city.

At eight o'clock in the evening, the officers proceeded to the boarding-house in South Front street. Mrs. Phillips herself came to the door, and on being asked if Colonel Edwards lived there, replied, without hesitation, that he did and that he was in. The Colonel rose from the table as he heard there was a party

of gentlemen enquiring for him, and though his heart sank with a serious misgiving, he proceeded without hesitation towards the door. Before he had taken more than three steps, however, Recorder Vaux advanced from the midst of the officers who now began to crowd into the room, and after looking at the forger for a moment, said politely

"This is Colonel Edwards, I believe."

Edwards dared not trust his voice with the emotion which he felt rising in his throat, but looking steadily in the face of the magistrate, he bowed in the affirmative.

"Then, sir, it is my unpleasant duty to inform you that you are under arrest," said the Recorder, laying his hand lightly upon the Colonel's shoulder.

At this signal the officers slid like magic in a circle round the prisoner and completely hemmed him from any movement of escape. Simultaneously with this manœuvre a female shriek burst from the direction of the card table and in the next moment the unfortunate young lady who was the most deeply interested spectator of the scene, was borne insensible from the room.

When the shock of this painful incident quivered on his nerves, the cheek of the forger flickered for an instant, but on taking a glass of cold water, which he suddenly asked for from one of the officers, he regained his self possession and intimated to the Recorder carelessly, that he desired to say a word or two to his friend Johnson. This request however was not only firmly refused, but according to previous consultation among the officers, a very strict eye was kept on Mr. Johnson to see that he did not slip from the room. The trunk of the forger, who denied that he had any baggage, was then seized and sealed, after which it was conveyed with him to the Recorder's office, Mr. Johnson following a step or two behind, in consequence of a polite but significant hint, that he was not exactly at liberty to go.

On arriving at the Recorder's office, Edwards' first question was to ask who were the most eminent counsel in the place, and on listening to a number who were named over in reply, he selected Mr. Dallas, now the Vice President of the United States, and an obsequious officer in attendance was at once despatched for the lawyer. During this trying period of his arrest, the Colonel maintained the utmost outward composure and having inquired several times without avail as to the cause of his ar-

rest, he complained with well affected indignation that they had treated him in a very unceremonious manner for a gentleman.

On the arrival of Mr. Dallas, he took that gentleman aside and stated his grievance in terms of the most earnest innocence, but with the view of taking a precaution which his guilt required, he represented the necessity that his trunk should remain inviolate from prying eyes, as it contained correspondence of a delicate nature, and some little trifles, which, with people of a confirmed suspicious nature, might be construed to his detriment.

Mr. Dallas, when this conversation was concluded, turned to the Recorder and informing him that the trunk was very valuable, notified him that it must not be detained, as he would present an order from Mr. Edwards to take it into his own possession. The Recorder, however, was prepared for this, and on receiving from Edwards the order and the keys, told Mr. Dallas that he felt obliged to take the responsibility of disobeying the rescript, and retaining the article within his custody.

This was an appalling decision for the forger, but sharpening with every new degree of his embarrassments, he called Mr. Dallas aside again, and rapidly drew three orders for a thousand dollars each, and gave them to him as his counsel fees, in the hope to preserve that much to carry on his defence. These orders, however, were refused like the first.

Having inspected the affidavit and warrant which charged his client with being a fugitive from justice from the State of New York, and finding them sufficiently strong for temporary detention, the distinguished counsel withdrew, and promised the forger to call on him early on Monday morning. A collation was then ordered at the prisoner's request, having partaken heartily of which, he was conveyed to prison for the night. On the departure of his friend the Colonel, Johnson was sharply interrogated, and being made to understand that he was looked upon as an accomplice of Edwards, and would suffer the consequences of a rigid construction of all the services which he had been known to render to the forger, unless he made a clear breast of his agency, he yielded to his fears, and communicated every thing that did not compromise himself, admitting his instrumentality in changing large portions of the money, and in being made the ineffective instrument

to deposit the five hundred dollars on behalf of Kitty. He was then allowed to go, but a strict watch was secretly set upon his motions, and all the depots guarded to prevent his escaping from the city.

On the following morning (Sunday) the Attorney General was summoned to the opening of the trunks, and having waited a reasonable time for the arrival of Mr. Dallas, who contented himself with merely sending the three \$1000 orders, the seals were broke. The first object that met their eyes on throwing up the lid, was the \$500 in gold designed for Kitty, which Johnson had described as having been returned by him to the forger on the afternoon before. Then came the bulk of the money, amounting in all to \$43,600. The most of this, however, had changed its character from the date of its receipt. Nearly \$5,000 of it was now in gold; only \$8,000 remained of the notes on the Bank of America, obtained from Corrie, and but \$3,000 of the Bank of Baltimore, as the proceeds of the \$10,000 check. There, however, was the fatal bag, marked "J. & Lee," which Caldwell had received in Baltimore over the broker's counter, from the boy Hanson, and more fatal still, the fraudulent post office stamps and letters, forming the combinations, "NEW ORLEANS, LA.":—"AUG." for August, and "PAID", were raked from the bottom of the trunk with the colored inks with which they had been charged.

The forger now seemed sold to his fate.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Examination in Philadelphia—Arrival at the Tombs—The Arraignment in the Sessions—Winfree and Child—Counterplotting—the Charmer and the Serpent.

In the hour of danger the brave never despair. Despite the threatening combination of evidence against him, the Colonel kept a firm heart and occupied his mind vigorously in counter combinations against the disastrous effect which the contents of his unlucky trunk had made upon his cause. He found it hard, however, to contrive any illusion to impair the force of the discovery of implements suited to the perpetration of the great forgery and of the very funds that were the proceeds of it, in his possession; so in default of any immediate device, he resolved to content himself with bluntly insisting upon his innocence, until the black horizon which now bound his brain should lighten with some lucky thought.

Unfortunately, in his strong conceit of his powers of persuasion he decided upon pursuing this course also with his counsel, and thus he commenced that fatal system of duplicity, which in the latter stages of his persecutions kept opening mines beneath their feet and betraying them to revelations against which they had taken no precaution. Mr. Dallas, though he disbelieved these representations of his client, did not feel disposed to combat them, but perceiving at once the extra difficulty which such partial confidence between the prisoner and his counsel would entail upon the cause, he determined to relieve himself of a portion of his vexatious task, by recommending additional aid. Edwards made no objection to this proposal; indeed it jumped exactly with his wishes, and in accordance with the suggestion of Mr. Dallas, Henry D. Gilpin, the late United States District Attorney, and Josiah Randall, Esq., were associated in the case.

Both of these gentlemen visited their client in his cell that very afternoon, and both of them, like their distinguished associate, went away persuaded that the large property which their client still held in Texas and in Louisiana, would be ample security for their magnificent fees.

A subsequent consultation at the office of Mr. Dallas, decided the three lawyers to issue a writ of habeas corpus, to be served upon the keeper of the prison demanding him to show cause, if any he had, why he detained the body of Monroe Edwards in his custody. The writ being duly granted by Judge Randall, a hearing was set at ten o'clock the following day.

While this was going on in favor of the forger, the plundered merchants and officers were equally busy on the other side. Simultaneously with the departure of Corrie and his assistants to Philadelphia, the interested parties in New York had despatched a lawyer to the Governor of their State, demanding a requisition on the Governor of Pennsylvania for the body of the forger, whose crimes they alleged had been perpetrated in the city of New York. Taking it for granted that these representations were correct, and that the specified offences had been committed within his jurisdiction, the Governor of the State of New York granted the requisition, and on the morning appointed for the examination on habeas corpus, it reached the city of Philadelphia.

On the same morning arrived Jacob Little, the Wall Street broker, in full confidence that the imprisoned Caldwell

would turn out to be the same operator to whom he had paid \$23,000 in the foregoing spring. It is hardly necessary to say that his calculations proved incorrect. The requisition likewise was of no effect until it had been recognised and subscribed to by the Governor of Pennsylvania. While therefore an expedition was despatched to Harrisburg, the capital of the State, for that purpose, the examination was at liberty to proceed. To guard their interests in this contest the prosecutors had secured the legal assistance of Wm. M. Meredith, the United States District Attorney, and Mr. Hart, and to strengthen their hands with weapons for their work, they had also despatched persons to Baltimore to summon the brokers of that city to attendance.

As might be expected, the court room and the avenues leading to it were on Tuesday morning densely crowded to get a peep at the great forger. Edwards was dressed on the occasion in a light blue handsome fitting frock coat, light pantaloons and vest; black stock with the collar turning downward over it, as was then the fashion. There was no jewelry about him, not even a pin in the plain bosom of his shirt, to indicate any thing that resembled foppery, though he wore and continued to wear throughout the examination, white silk gloves.

The examination commenced by Mr. Corrie giving an account of the whole machinery of the forgery down to the time of sending to Alexandria the \$25,600 in reply to the letter of Mr. Caldwell, and then continued until the finding of a portion of what he believed to be the same money in Edwards' trunk. He then was allowed to read a letter from one of the Baltimore brokers, in description of the person of Mr. Caldwell, which agreed with that of the Colonel in every point.

Mr. Gallagher, a clerk in the post office at Alexandria, testified that Edwards was the man who received Corrie's letter from the department at that place.

Mr. Ing, a clerk of Carter Mortimore & Co. of Baltimore, testified that the prisoner was the John P. Caldwell to whom he had paid the \$1000 draft,—and the members of the firm of Clark & Co. of Philadelphia testified that they had changed for Johnson, the friend of Edwards, several of the Bank of America notes, and recognised the money in the forger's trunk as a portion of the funds they had given in exchange.

The hearing of this testimony, with the intervening speeches of counsel, occupied five days, during which the excitement

of the public increased in geometrical progression. The forger and his counsel chafed at the delay. Their whole object was to bring proceedings to a speedy decision, that they might insist on their constitutional right to bail, in default of a full discharge, before the requisition could return from Harrisburg; but it was equally the object of the other side to delay, so a due number of motions, objections and verbose arguments were thrown in by the prosecution at every step of the proceedings, until the morning of Saturday, the 9th, brought the wished for receipt. The arrival of this paper brought matters summarily to a close, and notwithstanding the exceptions made in the last resort by Mr. Dallas to the sufficiency of the Governor's requisition, he was delivered into the hands of the New York officers, who that very afternoon bore him in triumph to their own city.

It is needless to attempt to describe the feelings of the forger when he found himself consigned to a narrow cell in the "Tombs" at New York, to await a formal and open trial before the highest criminal tribunal in the county for his offence. He possessed no extraordinary squeamishness in relation to public opinion and public exposure for he was possessed of a conceit which regarded every kind of notoriety as a species of bastard fame, but when he came to count over his fingers the terrible points of evidence which were to be brought up one after the other against him, even his great nerve quailed, and the prospective state prison door flung its cold shadow over his heart. These chilly visions were, however, unfrequent, and his daring and audacious mind kept continually encouraging him to hope and to scheme. In the face of the strong case that would be made out against him there seemed to be but two positions left to his defence; one was an *alibi*, and the other the flat assumption that he had possessed the money found in his trunk at the time of his arrest, previous to the 28th of August. So far as the latter point was concerned, his forethought had already taken ample precautions in relation to the *amount*; but unfortunately the Charles F. Johnson negro bond of the 2d August, did not describe the character of the \$50,000 paid to the party of the second part, neither could Miss Caroline Philips be expected to remind herself of the identity of the money shown to her, with that found in his trunk. Worse still, the Johnson bond was signed and executed, and nothing could now be added within the signatures. Desperate cases, however, require desperate reme-

dies, and the forger inwardly resolved that a schedule should be annexed, after the signatures of the bond, describing the character of the money paid by the illusory negro trader at the Eutaw House, and agreeing, as near as it was proper, with the money taken from his trunks. Having settled firmly on this line of battle, he with the resolution of an inflexible but mistaken judgment determined to fortify his policy by communicating the same stories in apparent good faith to his counsel, in precisely the same style that he intended it should be imposed upon the court and upon the public.

Immediately on taking this conclusion; he secured the services of Robert Emmett, Esq., and if he did not persuade him of his entire innocence, he, at any rate, convinced him of his ample ability, from his Texan and other southern resources, to meet and liquidate all the demands which those who labored in his service would have a right to make. About the same time he wrote to his brother Ashmore, then in Texas, acquainting him with his condition and the large amount of property at stake on his discharge, and urging him in the most earnest terms to come directly on and lend him those little aids which could only be confided in safety to the affection of a brother. A letter of a tender character to a lady in Philadelphia, whose name our story does not require us to give, furnished him with funds to meet the expenses which he would necessarily incur for comforts while in prison.

On the 29th October it was announced to the forger that the Grand Jury had found true bills against him in four cases, and on the following morning he was arraigned.

He was dressed with his usual elegance and care, and by the easy confidence with which he walked to his seat, he showed that he was not in the least abashed by his position. The court was crowded with curious spectators, and the handsome financier was the centre of all eyes. After the reading of the indictment, he was addressed by the clerk with the interrogatories which are usually answered by the counsel, but with a boldness which did not wait for the intervention of counsel, he answered them directly for himself. As this little event shows the decisive originality of his character, we give it as taken down by the reporters for the papers of the following day.

CLERK.—"Monroe Edwards—"

EDWARDS.—"That's my name."

CLERK,—(Not noticing the interruption,)

"*alias* John P. Caldwell, *alias* Hugh S. Hill, you are indicted for forgery in the third degree, for *forging* an order for the delivery of goods, and with uttering the same, knowing it to be forged. Do you demand a trial on this indictment?"

EDWARDS.—"Yes sir!"

CLERK.—"You are also indicted for forging an order for the delivery of goods, and with *uttering* the same, knowing it to be forged. Do you demand a trial on *this* indictment?"

EDWARDS.—"I do, sir!"

The clerk then repeated the same forms in relation to two other indictments, and obtained similar answers as to those given to the first.

The promptness with which those replies were given, the confident boldness of their tone, and the slight tinge of manly indignation in the forger's general bearing as he faced the court, insensibly impressed all who saw him with a favorable opinion and a strong desire to believe him innocent. The Recorder himself was not entirely exempt from this sympathetic sentiment, and as he caught the large blue eyes of the forger fixed steadily upon him, he involuntarily inclined his head in a *suave* manner, as he inquired of him, instead of his counsel, if any arrangement was desired in relation to the time of the trial.

Here the counsel spoke, and upon his representing that, from the multiplicity and complication of the charges, it would be impossible for them to fix upon a time, the District Attorney told him that he had no objection to allow them any length of time that would be reasonable for their preparation. This ended the matter for the day, and the well-dressed prisoner was led back to his cell, distributing the perfumes of Paradise at every step, among the oily officers who formed his guard.

From the first day of the Colonel's arrival at the Tombs, visitors of every degree had been making daily application for admittance to the prison to see him, and at the close of the first week, when troops of others had emboldened them to the essay, Winfree and Childs both ventured to seek an interview. Edwards was glad to see the latter, for he had work for him in store; but the former, who came in company with a companion, he was forced to rebuke for his unwarrantable assurance in endeavoring to make a penny's worth of small capital, by showing him up to a third person as a lion. He therefore refused an introduction to the sweater's companion; and taking a long look at them both, he coolly remarked that he

was busy, and stepped back into his cell.

Childs was a man of more prudence and better breeding than Winfree, and though Edwards knew he had been playing double with him, he felt more safety in dealing with his cautious nature than he would in trusting the headlong, undeliberating villany of the mercenary Winfree. What Child had communicated to the authorities was merely what they could have proved without him, and it had the excuse moreover of having been wrung from him by personal apprehension. When, therefore, the Englishman bowed timidly as he approached him upon the prison corridor, he frankly extended his hand and thanked him for his visit. "I am glad," said he, "to find you have not been involved in any unlucky embarrassments; and I am gratified also, that you managed so adroitly to make a bargain for your release on conditions, which, though they looked very imposing to those stupid officers, were, in view of what we both knew was obtainable in other quarters, of no consequence to me at all."

The Englishman was completely reassured at this skillful polish of his treachery, and taking up the hint ran on volubly for some time in an elaborate enlargement of his justification; the Colonel interrupted him by the information that Winfree had just been in, but that he had refused to hold any converse with him in the belief that his sole object was to draw from his confidence something that he might sell to the prosecution.

"The wretch!" exclaimed the Englishman, with well assumed vehemence; "I trust he knows nothing that he can turn to such account."

"Nothing," said Edwards sententiously.

"No letters?"

"Ah, yes, two or three, but none that contain any thing that can do me harm."

The forger did not dream of the fatal mis-spelled word "*flew*" which had crept into the Hugh S. Hill, and the John P. Caldwell letters, and which was next to be found in a letter over the bona fide signature of Monroe Edwards, in the hands of Winfree.

"Well, that is good," said the Englishman, in a congratulatory tone, and secretly felicitating himself that no one had the power to run an opposition with him in treachery, if that should be his ultimate determination. "That is good!"

Edwards knew the Englishman well, and though he knew him to be sordid and unprincipled to a degree, he was aware also that he was capable of long calculations as to which would ultimately be the

best of two courses to pursue. By the confidence which the authorities had already reposed in Child, they were foreclosed against his prosecution, so he had nothing more to fear from them; while on the other hand, if Edwards should escape he would have to fly from a desperate and implacable enemy. Besides in the first case, the reward that he would have to expect from the mere fragments that would escape the fingers of the greedy officers, would be but very trifling, while if the forger should escape by his assistance, the \$43,000 which he must consequently regain, would afford a wide margin for his repayment.

These were the thoughts that ran through the brain of the prisoner as he held the above conversation, and at the close of the Englishman's last expression, he commenced to insinuate the elements of a proper choice between himself and the prosecution, in a manner so ingenious, that though his hearer was aware of the appeal, he could observe no corner in the soft diplomacy of the forger that would warrant him in lodging a formal agreement as to terms. The Colonel did not wish him to; indeed, he would have been mortified at an evidence that had done his work so roughly. His object was merely to impress his visiter with his true policy in the matter, and to trust to his remaining steadfast to the extra, though perhaps distant dollar of his friend. Conceiving that he had accomplished this effect by the gravity that settled on the face of his visiter, he broke abruptly from the matter in hand, and brusquely inquired of Child how he was off for money.

The Englishman touched his empty pockets with mournful significance.

"Well, never mind my boy," said the Colonel, springing cheerfully from his bunk and slapping his visiter on the shoulder, "If you have got none I have. Look at here!" and the forger pulled out a wallet full of notes. "Now," continued he, slowly withdrawing one of the bills from the rest, "I have only to whisper in your discreet ear that there is plenty more where they come from: so put this in your vest pocket and remain at the Waverly Hotel as long as you please. It is no more than fair that while the city furnishes me this huge and imposing residence, that my friend should be entitled to one of less than half the size. Come, come, no denial of my little loan, put it in your pocket and call in the day after to-morrow when I shall have something of the utmost importance to communicate to you."

At this moment a keeper appeared at

the cell door to remind the visiter that that the hour for the departure of visitors had come, when bewildered and embarrassed by his extraordinary interview, the Englishman bade his extraordinary friend good day.

On the next day the shameless sweater notwithstanding the contemptuous rebuff which he had received the morning previous, came sneaking to the Colonel's cell again, but inasmuch as he this time came alone, and appeared contrite for his offence of the day before, the Colonel received him with a condescension as gratifying as it had been doubtful. The conversation lasted for some two hours, when the clumsy Virginian discovering that the Colonel evaded all direct inquiries about the merits of the case with the most skillful, yet unexceptionable evolutions, resolved to propose a measure by which to gain his ends in another way. This was no less than a hint that Mary Moore would like to visit him, and if he felt agreeable to such an interview all things would be prepared by the proposer to accomplish her free access.

The idea put forth by the sweater was inexpressively repulsive to the refined Colonel; but after a moment's consultation with himself he changed his mind. Starving sailors, eat rats and crickets, and famishing travellers, have been known to slake their thirst at stagnant pools and draw a doubtful sustenance from leather. The Texan consented to the proposition and Winfree delighted at the prospect now afforded him of gaining something that he might sell at a profit to the merchants, withdrew with as good a bow as his semi-vulgarity was capable of.

With the following morning came the Englishman again, and it was wonderful to see the affectionate interest which the Colonel took in his society. He gossiped with him with all the apparent familiarity of absolute confidence, and in the seeming frankness of his soul, communicated a budget of the most important secrets connected with his life, which, though none of them had an existence, he conjured the Englishman never to betray. Winding up at last with the developement of some gorgeous, but equally imaginary plans of future speculation, in which he generously offered his excited listener a share, in case every thing went right in the unpleasant business then on hand, he leaned back in his chair in the belief that no more could be done to secure him to his cause.

He had not only shrewdly measured his man, but he had worked up that mysteri-

ous sentiment of reciprocity, which holds a certain power in every bosom, in a manner which showed his profound knowledge of his own species. No nature is so cold as not to respond in some degree to the warm confidence of an overflowing heart, and the Englishman, yielding to the generous law, insensibly gave substantial exchange for the spurious trusts that he so liberally received. Insensibly also, he was inspired to as much faint friendship as his vitiated nature could experience, and his dormant sense of honor was stimulated to rally and stand steadfast to its new adhesion. There was, it is true, a trifle of vanity mingled with this new sentiment; for he was deeply flattered at the high consideration shown him by the confidence of a man of the forger's superior caste, but that vanity made the new sentiment all the stronger, and what made it stronger still, was the splendid lure that hung glittering in the future to reward him when the work was done.

The subtle Texan saw in the dreamy wanderings of his listener's eye, that he had impressed him on all the points of which his nature was susceptible, and then broached the character of his defence.

"An *alibi*!" exclaimed the Englishman in astonishment. "Surely you do not hope to establish an *alibi* in the face of the testimony of all the witnesses who will be summoned from Baltimore and Richmond to testify positively that you was in the first place on the 31st August, and in the second on the 2d of September."

"And why should I not?" coolly replied the Colonel, looking his visitor steadily in the face as he spoke. "Why should I not, when it is a fact that I was not in either of those places at either of those times?"

"But the brokers swear positively that you and Caldwell were one and the same person, and besides, you will recollect that you was absent from Philadelphia during the whole of the specified time!"

"I am advised of all these points;" replied the forger collectedly, "but the brokers will swear under a mistake. I was in New York between the 28th August and the 4th September; so, indeed, was you, and so the registers of the Northern and Waverly Hotels would show, if an unfortunate intrigue of mine had not consigned me for the entire period of days to the private lodgings of a lady."

"But the hotel books of Baltimore, Alexandria, and Richmond, and the very lists of the railroad line bear your name and the alternate name of Caldwell,"

stammered out the Englishman, hardly knowing what the Colonel would be at.

"Ah, there's where you must help me from this vicious stroke of fate," replied the forger, laying his hand upon his listener's arm. "A friend of mine—I grieve to say it—a poor misguided, desperate friend of mine has done this forgery, and has temporarily used my name, as it would seem, merely for want of another *alias*. I will whisper in your ear who he is one of these days. Though he deserves no mercy from me, I cannot consent to betray him, for there is a sacred obligation in friendship which cannot be set aside, unless the friendship itself is directly and maliciously violated. You see, now, how I am fixed, and how a friend can help me!"

"I see, I see," said the Englishman, as he drew in his cheeks and bit their inner skin, as if in deep and anxious cogitation. "I see what you want, but—"

"But the business will be expensive, you would say—so it will, but it shall be my care that you do not lack for means. There is nothing to do for the present, but to insert my name on the registers of the Waverly and Northern Hotels, under the respective dates of the 30th and 31st August; and it may be necessary to go to Albany, and do the same thing there for the 2d of September. These are the first steps, and after they are done, we can talk about subsequent arrangements."

The Englishman well knew that "subsequent arrangements" meant the procuration of witnesses to sustain the interpolated registers, but he said nothing in relation to this suspicion.

"Well," said the forger, rousing his visiter from the reverie into which he had fallen; "now, we see our way clear out of danger, if every thing is managed right! What say you to my views, eh Childs?"

"They are good, replied that gentleman slowly; "but I must take some little time to think them over. I will call the day after to-morrow, and then you shall have my advice in full."

"Let me, however, remind you of one thing again;" said the forger, following the Englishman as he stepped towards the door, and laying his hand affectionately on his shoulder; "there shall be no lack of means to meet all the expenses *we* may be driven into. Bear that in your mind continually, so that your calculations may be broad and effectual. And now," continued he, "since you must go, good morning; but let your visit be to-morrow, instead of the day after, for we must get to work betimes."

"Well, to-morrow be it, then," replied the Englishman with an involuntary quotation.

"One word more," said Edwards, beckoning him back; then taking his hand he placed his face close to that of his visiter's, and looking him earnestly in the eye for a moment, as he pressed his fingers, he said, in a low and earnest tone, "I can depend upon you in this business, Childs?"

"To the death," said Childs, returning

the pressure, and betrayed, before thinking, of a pledge, which he had intended to withhold.

"Then *au revoir!*" exclaimed the forger, waving his hand as a signal of adieu.

When the Englishman got beyond the prison walls he went along the streets towards his hotel, shaking his head at intervals of his reverie, as if he could not compass the genius of the wonderful man, from whose fascination he had just escaed.



ONE OF THE FORGER'S AFTERNOONS IN PRISON.

CHAPTER XXV.

Alteration of the registers—Forgery in the Tombs—Search for Holcroft—The new Temptation.

On the morrow came the Englishman according to request. His hesitations were

over, and with a different face from that which he had presented on the day before, he promptly told the Colonel that he was with him to the death. Edwards felt that he could give full credit to the sincerity of this declaration and rely upon it firmly likewise, as long as his money should

hold out, and being tolerably well assured of a good supply of that needful ammunition from his secret female friend in Philadelphia, and also from his brother, he had but small hesitation in entrusting Mr. Child with the first instalments of his task. He therefore directed him, in plain terms, to go first to the Northern Hotel, in Courtlandt street, and seizing a favorable chance, enter the name of "Edwards La." upon the register under the date of the 30th of August. His next duty was to make a similar entry on the register of the Waverly Hotel, under the date of the 31st of August, the very day on which the brokers were prepared to swear he was in Baltimore, some two hundred miles away, cashing the New York drafts.

These commissions were faithfully performed by the Englishman, though, as will hereafter be discovered, they were not unaccompanied with some trifling inadequacies, that were to neutralize the entire of their *prima facie* force.

On the following week Child went to Albany and made another spurious entry there, to offset the date on which it might yet be discovered that the forger had effected so many of his exchanges in the city of New York. This latter expedition was attended with some risk, for having been baffled in repeated attempts to use the register without being seen, Child was fain to forego his intentions until after the hours of closing up. He then left his chamber, and with nothing on him but his shirt, stealthily descended to the bar-room. To his dismay, however, he was suddenly seized by the porter who was on watch, and charged with an intent to steal. The dilemma was an embarrassing one, but summoning as much courage as possible, the interpolator expressed a prompt indignation at the charge, and explained his situation by saying that he was sick at the stomach, and having no water in his chamber had been forced to hurry down to the bar-room to supply himself. This excuse seemed satisfactory to the porter, upon which after punishing his entrails with a deluge from a huge pitcher on the counter, the Englishman was allowed to return up stairs. He did not again try to accomplish his purpose at this house, however, for fear, if the spuriousness of the entry ever were discovered, the two circumstances might be put together: so he crossed over to the American Hotel, and after a due degree of patient watching, accomplished his object there. There was nothing more of this kind now to do, except an entry on the register of a hotel in Frede-

ricksburg, Va., that might be incompatible with the forger's operations in Richmond at the same date; but the proposal of this additional job was exceedingly distasteful to the Englishman, whose sudden seizure by the Albany porter was yet very fresh in his recollection. An earnest outlay of the forger's eloquence and money, however, with a show of the necessity of having all the entries made before the prosecution should get a hint of the style of their defence, brought the serviceable instrument to the Colonel's wishes, and the Frederick interpolation was consequently performed.

While this was going on, the prosecution were industriously engaged in arranging their facts, and preparing their line of battle. To aid them, one of the firm of Maunsel, White & Co., had arrived with the Hugh S. Hill letter, in answer to which the forger first obtained their signature. Then it was that the prosecuting council saw that Hugh S. Hill had been merely the *avant alias* of John P. Caldwell, and that both of those visionary gentlemen found a tangible incarnation and embodiment in the extremely handsome person of Colonel Monroe Edwards, of cell No. 64, Tombs, New York.

As soon as this discovery was made, it was perceived that Winfree might be used, and the fellow, whose overtures of treachery had been contemptuously neglected up till then, was now applied to for some of the letters which had been sent him at various times by the Colonel.

The particular impulse to this application was the discovery of a singular misconstruction found in both the Caldwell letters, and it struck the prosecutors at once, if the same strange perversion of the rules of spelling should appear in the regular letters of the forger, the fact must be conclusive that they were written by one and the same person. This identifying peculiarity was the word "*flew*," for *few*, which we have pointed out before, and which, from its perfect capriciousness and arbitrary construction, could not be supposed to have suggested itself, in that particular combination, to any two intelligent minds in the universe. It was some thousands, nay some hundreds of thousands to one, that Monroe Edwards would not have spelled this word like John P. Caldwell, if Monroe Edwards were an honest man, but if he did spell it just the same, it measurably turned against him. Winfree, who relished nothing so much as a good piece of villany, obeyed the wishes of the prosecution with alacri-

ty, and placed them in possession of several letters from the Colonel.

It happened that the first one of the Colonel's letters which the prosecutors opened, was that of the 28th July, which informed Winfree that the writer was short of funds; and which also sought to prevent a threatened visit of the "sweater" by saying that he "should remain in Philadelphia but a *'few'* days."

This was all the prosecution seemed to want, and having carefully filed it with their most precious papers, they dispatched Mr. Winfree with the assurance that he might regard himself thenceforth in the light of a philanthropist who had rendered great service to society. They were too wary of his character, however, to let him know in what nice point exactly he had served them. Winfree cared but little for this mistrust: he was satisfied with the benefaction which he had conferred upon himself, apart from the benefit he had rendered to society, and it is fair to suppose that the detestable treachery in which he had been engaged was naturally gratifying to the congenial baseness of a composition so saturated with small villany as his.

During the time these preparations were being made on both sides, the Colonel's resources kept waxing lower and lower, between the ruinous drains of Child and Mary Moore, and the necessities of future operations, as well as the just expectations of his lawyer, required that he should adopt some decisive policy to replenish his stock. At least, he must contrive some device to satisfy, or quiet the demands of his legal adviser. For this latter purpose he conceived the daring project of committing a forgery upon Robt. Emmett, Esq., the very counsel who was defending him, from a forgery already done.

This audacious idea no sooner struck his mind than it was adopted; and he at once set about throwing the deception into shape. He had informed Mr. Emmett that he was possessed of large amounts of property in Texas, some of which he had ordered to be sold to meet the contingent costs of his defence. It was now the time to turn this report to useful account. He therefore drew a letter purporting to come from the Cashier of a Bank in New Orleans to Mr. Emmett, informing him of the deposit on that day of the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, thirty-five cents, to the credit of his client, which notification he (the cashier) thought proper to send through him (the counsel) as he had heard by the newspapers that Mr. Edwards was in prison.

This letter was sealed and addressed to Robert Emmett, Esq., New York, and received finally the circular post mark, "New Orleans, La.," from a fine stamp, which had cost the forger five or six patient days work with his pen knife to accomplish.

How it was run through the post office in this city, and without the addition of the local stamp, we are as unable to speak, as of that similar branch in the Caldwell forgery; but sure it is, that at a proper lapse from the date stamped on the outside the letter as the New Orleans endorsement, the worthy counsellor received the missive from the postman, as if it were legitimate in all its courses. Sure it is also, that with his good natured face radiant with satisfaction, he the same day brought it to the forger's cell and showed it to him as a sign of happy tidings.

Encouraged and emboldened by this successful piece of deception, Edwards at once decided upon another stroke of policy which, though it was at the time characterised by some superficial thinkers as a piece of gratuitous effrontery, was recognised by more accurate observers as the pure result of philosophical calculation and extended worldly wisdom.

He found it necessary to sustain his indignant position of entire innocence, and, therefore, striking at the readiest means, he boldly directed the commencement of prosecutions against all concerned in his arrest—for false arrest, for false imprisonment and slander; and likewise instituted actions of trover for the recovery of his money and his trunks. This intrepid course, though it excited the ironical merriment of some, produced a favorable impression on a larger class; while those who were not to be deceived by such dashing tactics, could not withhold an admiration for his *game* which had an operation very much like sympathy. It was true that the stratagem had the immediate effect of provoking the procuration of additional indictments against him, but he was too old a child to be frightened by such bug-bears, and he had moreover sagacity enough to know, that a thousand fresh indictments could not add a single point to the case against him, and that the defeat of one would be the assured defeat of all. When therefore he had made his move, and when his adversaries wincing under its effect, sought to jump the difficulty, he had a right to laugh very heartily at their rude attempts to counter check him.

He had now attended to all the secret preparations within reach, and made a

virtual manifesto for the public aspect of the case; but still he was not ready for the fight; therefore, when he was called for trial on the first Monday of December, he applied for a postponement for three months more, until the following March term, on the basis of an application to obtain some evidence from a person in the West Indies, whose testimony he alleged to be material to his defence. His proposition being verified by affidavit, could not be denied without apparent injustice, so the postponement was allowed.

The forger had a double object in this new manœuvre. The first was to procure a commission to take the testimony of Holcroft, *alias* Charles F. Johnson, whom he judged then to be at St. Thomas or St. Pierre; and the second, to gain time until the arrival of his brother, whom he might now shortly expect at New York. To Holcroft he intended to write in advance of the commission, informing him of his condition, and acquainting him with his desire that when the commission should arrive, he would go before the Consul and verify the spurious negro bond, executed at Baltimore by himself and Child, and signed by the latter with the Parisian *alias* of the Slaver. The letter which was to convey to Holcroft this intelligence, was likewise to be accompanied by a copy of the Baltimore bond, and likewise a description of the money found in his (Edward's) trunks at the time of his arrest, so that the slaver might answer advisedly to all the interrogatories put to him, in the same manner as if he had been Child, and the paper partnership an actual transaction.

These intentions were duly acted on. Letters were despatched by the forger to St. Thomas, St. Pierre and Havana, directed to Holcroft. In some days after, two commissions were gotten out under the joint supervision of both sides, and duly despatched to the Consuls of the two former ports, with direction to take the testimony of Charles F. Johnson on the interrogatories and cross interrogatories therein contained, if in either of those ports, said Johnson could be found.

It was not long after these papers had departed on their mission when Ashmore Edwards arrived in the city of New York, and agreeably to the private direction of his incarcerated brother, assumed an *alias* and under its cover obtained admission to the prison. At once the Colonel felt a deep relief from the perplexities of his situation, and the embrace with which he greeted his kinsman when he had drawn him in his cell, had the double force of

natural affection and selfish gratulation. Up to this time he had trod through every stage of his preparations in uneasiness and doubt, but now he had one in whose fidelity he could absolutely trust, and feeling that his directions would thenceforth be scrupulously obeyed, he could fall back on that confidence in his own powers of contrivance, which had always borne him out before.

Deciding more wisely with his brother than with his lawyers, he made a clean breast of every item of his schemes, bluntly telling him that being "*in*" he must be assisted "*out*," and intimating, moreover, with but very little delicacy, that the recovery of money which would attend his acquittal, should be equally divided between them both.

We need not explain the reason why Ashmore Edwards felt no moral shock when the deep turpitude of his brother was developed to his eyes. Not being required to delineate his character for the purposes of this history, it is but necessary for us to say, that he listened to the relation without any emotions of conscience, and closed with the intimated terms by professing himself in readiness to do whatever was necessary "to carry the thing through straight." Upon this brotherly understanding he set himself to work in walking over the trail of Child, for the purpose of ascertaining that the registers had been altered as represented by that gentleman; and next he turned his attention to making engagements with additional counsel. In this latter branch of service, under the direction of his brother, he went to Washington and secured the services of the Hon. J. J. Crittenden, U. S. Senator for the State of Kentucky, and the Hon. Thomas Marshal, representative in Congress from the same state, for the forthcoming trial. He enlisted the feelings of these gentlemen by the representation that the prisoner's family was one of the most respectable of Kentucky, and confirmed the friendly bias by a shrewd suggestion that the Colonel, when discharged and put in possession of his own, would be amply able to testify his gratitude in a most liberal manner. In the city of New York, Mr. Evarts, a young lawyer of great talent and indefatigable industry, was added to the legal constellation, and put in immediate communication with Mr. Emmett, who, up to this conjunction, had been charged with all the labor of the case. A general correspondence then took place between these four gentlemen, when having settled upon the order of precedence, the two

latter assumed the preparation of the details.

On the other side the merchants had strengthened the weakness of Mr. Whiting, the District Attorney, by the engagement of George F. Allen, and Mr. Hart, of Philadelphia,—and the further addition of Messrs. Ogden Hoffman and Wm. W. Price to the cause, obviated the dangers to be apprehended from the incapacity of the regular prosecuting officer entirely. Thus were the opposing champions gradually marshalling themselves in line, and arranging their phalanxes of conflicting facts for the final struggle, while the forger waited to hear of the slaver and his commission.

Time ran around with him most tediously during this suspense, but at length the month of March relieved him of further doubt as to the result of his despatches, by the sad information in its place that both commissions had been returned unsatisfied, no such man as Charles F. Johnson being known either in St. Thomas or St. Pierre.

This was a tremendous blow to the sanguine expectations of the forger. None of his letters, not even the one to Havana, had been answered, and Holcroft seemed to have disappeared from the stage entirely. But there was no time for despair. The case was to be called on in a few days, and if another postponement could be obtained, his brother must go on to Havana and hunt Holcroft up himself, (who certainly would soon be there,)—or in failure of that, must, in the last resort, get some one to supply the slaver's place. It would be very difficult he knew, to get another postponement for such a purpose in the face of the signal failure of the two previous commissions; but to cure this obstacle and to give the motion as much plausibility as the first, he determined to draw up a pretended letter from Johnson, dated from Havana, as if in reply to a recent one of his own, accounting for the absence of that gentleman from the two former named places, and explaining the protracted illness still upon him, which had detained him so long in Havana. This was no sooner decided on by the forger, than with his usual promptness it was done. He then sent for one of his counsel, and showing him the letter, (which was copied in the hand of Ashmore,) he desired him to make the motion for the time that would be necessary for a commission to go and come from the Havana. The lawyer, of course, at once acceded to the propriety of this step, whereupon the Colonel handed him

a letter, which he himself had written in pretended reply to the letter of Johnson, but which was really intended to dupe no person but the lawyer himself. This letter was unsealed, and at an indication from his client the lawyer ran it down. He evinced much satisfaction as he rapidly devoured the page, and at its end, inquired if a copy had been taken of it?

"No," said Edwards, carelessly, "it did not seem to me to be of any use."

"I am not certain but it may be," said the lawyer, slowly folding it up. "At any rate, I will have it copied before I send it to the letter bag." He then left the prison.

The following is the letter which thus impressed him. We give it as another evidence of the singular ingenuity and talent of the writer:

CITY PRISON, NEW YORK, 4th April, 1842.

CHARLES F. JOHNSON, ESQ.

MY VALUED FRIEND:—I have received your letter of the 17th February, and regret exceedingly to hear of your illness. It would be needless for me to enter into the details of this unfounded prosecution against me; you know how utterly foundless they are. If I were alone in the world, I should care but little for this prosecution; but the pain it has given to my family and friends, and the injuries that by it have been inflicted on you, has been the cause of more unhappiness to me than any personal considerations.

I am sorry that I could not meet you at St. Pierre in January, but as it was no fault of mine, I trust you will not attach any blame to me therefor, and I do hope you will not enforce against me the damages I am liable for, by the failure on my part to comply with our contract. Under the belief that you would be at St. Pierre or St. Thomas, I wrote to you to both of these places 1st February, and sent out a commission to take your testimony in case you should not come on to New York; unfortunate for me was your short stay in Martinique, and still more so was your illness and detention in Cuba. I now ask you, "Uncle Charles," to do me a favor, and as you have often told me that you regarded me with the affection of a brother or son, I hope you will not disregard it. It is merely to come on to this city in person. I know that your engagements in Mexico are extensive, and probably imperative, but if it be in the bounds of possibility, do for God's sake come on here in person. Your personal presence here would shut the mouth of rank malice itself. I feel assured, if your health and engagements will admit of it, you will be here, but in case any accident should prevent it, I have had a commission sent out to take your testimony.

The commission is sent to three gentlemen at Havana, the American Consul is one of them. But do come in person, for it will not detain you long. I have taken no pains to contradict

the many slanders that are published against me, for it is my intention to meet them in open court before a jury of my countrymen; all I ask is fair stake, and I shall refute every lie that the paid and perjured scoundrels have propagated against me. It is not for me to advise you in regard to your own interest; you best know what steps to take. If you do not come on I would be glad if you will annex your copy of our contract to your depositions as you have been before advised, your funds in my hands were attached, and all that was not stolen is, or was, in the hands of the Recorder of Philadelphia; upwards of \$2000, of the funds I had at the time of my arrest, has not been accounted for, which, together with my diamonds and a large portion of my wardrobe has, I suppose, been divided amongst the *very honest and gentlemanly* persons who officiated at my arrest. Hoping to see you by the first of May,

I remain as ever,

Your friend,

M. EDWARDS.

P. S. On arriving here call on Wm. H. Evarts, Esq., 2 Hanover street, and he will tell you how you can see me.

The counsel made the motion for a new commission, and after some opposition from the prosecution, who charged them with contriving false delays, they obtained their object, and the trial again went off till June.

It now behoved the Colonel to bustle, as the last season of his probation was plainly measured out, and what was to be done that was to be of service, must be accomplished in advance of the despatch of the commission. While, therefore, the formal lawyers were busied in drawing papers and serving copies upon each other, his brother and himself were rapidly engaged in making preparations to cover the ground of the commission in advance.

As Ashmore was to take with him to Havana a perfect copy of the Johnson bond, for Holcroft's use on the investigation in that city, and as it was his brother's intention to add to that bond a schedule of the kind of moneys received upon it, by way of accounting for the funds found in his trunks, the first object of the brothers was of course the preparation of this schedule, and its annexation to the bond. This was accordingly done on the very day of the adjournment, and as the document is one of the curiosities of this history, we herewith submit it for the reader's curious inspection. The bond to which it was annexed being marked "A," this supplementary exhibit of course took the mark of

"B."

"I hereby acknowledge to have this day received of Chas. F. Johnson, Esq., the sum of fifty

thousand dollars (\$50,000) in trust, in the following manner, to wit:—

In gold six thousand five hundred dollars,	\$6,500 00
In New York Bank notes, twenty-two thousand seven hundred and forty-four dollars, at par,	22,744 00
"In Baltimore Bank notes, fourteen thousand two hundred dollars at 2 per cent discount, equal	13,916 00
"In Virginia Bank notes, seven thousand and fifty dollars at 3 per cent discount, equal	6,838 50
"In silver one dollar and fifty cents	1 50
	<hr/>
	\$50,000 00

"Which said sum above named I am hereby held, and firmly bound, to appropriate in manner and form as is stipulated and agreed in the contract of copartnership, this day entered into between said Charles F. Johnson and myself. Done at Baltimore, Md., this second day of August, one thousand eight hundred and forty-one (1841.) M. EDWARDS."

The addition of this schedule to the bond, seemed to make up the *prima facie* evidence in favor of the statement that the money found in his trunks, was that paid him on the 2d August, by Charles F. Johnson, the party of the first part; and it needed now but the round evidence of Mr. Johnson himself, to make it potent, beyond contravention, on the trial.

Undertaking to arrange this part of the business, Ashmore Edwards took the papers, and with letters from his brother to the slaver, set out on the southern mail route, hoping to catch a brig announced to sail from Charleston, S. C., on the fifth day thereafter, and thus to gain a handsome start of the commission which could not go from New York in perhaps ten days, or in a week at the shortest.

The departure of Ashmore and the momentousness of his mission, set a gravity upon the mercurial forger, that for a time looked very much like sadness. He gradually recovered his spirits, however, and found a partial solace from the company of Child.

This gentleman was still boarding at the Waverly Hotel at the Colonel's expense, and consequently he was to be considered as still enlisted in his service, though to say the truth, the forger's confidences to him of late had been so sparse as to excite not only his surprise, but to arouse his jealousy at the stranger who had been closeted with his friend so frequently during the previous six weeks.

The complaints of the Englishman on the score of neglect were, however, soon to be obviated. The Colonel again had work for him in store. It was work of a

strong nature too, for as yet nothing had been done to procure, or to manufacture testimony to sustain the interpolated registers.

The forger had resolved that Mr. Child should perform a portion of this service, and Mr. Child, with the natural instinct of a rogue, who feels himself accessible to base approach, knew what the Colonel expected of him. The proposition, he was aware, would surely come, but in what shape exactly, it would strike him, he could not so easily determine. It was sure to be insidious and smooth, for a man of Edward's refinement and address would not be guilty of such grossness as to put forward any proposal that wore the rank garb of villany upon its outside. The Englishman, therefore, girded up the loins of his soul against the Protean temptation, whatever shape it might assume, and resolved to steer clear of perjury himself, at any rate.

One afternoon, as he and the forger were sitting together upon the side of the bunk in cell No. 64, Edwards during a long conversation upon the prospects of the case, suddenly turned upon him after a long pause, and said :

"Child, you surely must remember that I was in New York on the 30th and 31st December?"

"No," said the Englishman with a slow and positive tone, for he saw that the temptation had come. "No, I do not!"

"Why, you certainly must," reiterated the forger, looking him full in the face; "for I invited you on the 31st to dine with me at the Waverly Hotel."

"It cannot be," said the Englishman in the same measured and resolute tone as before.

"Why, nonsense, man! I tell you I sent you a note of invitation on that day, and I have no doubt you have it still in your possession."

"I am convinced that you are mistaken!" replied the Englishman firmly. "I never destroy such notes, and I am well satisfied that I have none such in my possession."

"I tell you again," persisted the forger, "that I sent such a note to you, and at such a time; and I am convinced, moreover, that you must still have it in your possession—if not among your other letters, at least lying away in the pocket of some cast-off coat!"

Child shook his head.

"Nay, do not shake your head so soon,

but do me the favor at least to look among your papers, so that you may speak more advisedly when you call to-morrow."

"I'll look with pleasure," replied the Englishman, "but as I said before, I am assured that you are entirely mistaken."

"I have heard you boast of your memory," said the forger, amiably—"do you think if I were to remind you of a portion of our conversation on that day, you could be convinced?"

"I might."

"Well, then, do you not recollect saying, as we sat at table, that you wished you had twelve hundred dollars to embark in a certain speculation: and do you not recollect also my reply that in one month from that day, which would be the 1st October, I should receive a payment of some thousands, when, *if every thing turned out right, you should have the twelve hundred dollars with pleasure?*"

The Englishman winced. Here was the bid for the perjury full in his face. He quivered slightly. He turned his eyes evasively from the ceiling to the floor—in short, every way but upon his inflexible tempter—and at last, in an infirm and wavering tone, he replied:

"Really, Monroe, so many events of importance have intervened since that time, that my mind is quite confused upon the subject; but I will look when I go home, and if I find the note you speak of, why, *every thing must be right.*"

The subtle forger laughed after the departing figure of his dupe, and the Englishman went musing to his hotel. On his arrival there he almost involuntarily commenced a search for a note which he felt convinced never had an existence. Brooding over his late conversation, he kept mousing about his drawers. From thence he transferred his exertions to his cast-off clothes; when lo! in the inside pocket of a faded coat, that had long since of the identical character that the been laid aside, was found a billet, which was forger had described. How it came there the bewildered Englishman could not venture to imagine; but there it was with its glossy black "N. Y. Aug. 1st, 1841," staring him in the face, while the twelve hundred dollars, which had been insinuated in his mind, kept sprawling itself hideously between every line.

Awed by the terrible reflection that he held in his hand the price and bargain of his soul, he sank in a chair and relapsed into moody calculation.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Pharisaism of roguery—the Decision of Child upon the last Temptation—the Commission at Havana—the Testimony of Charles F. Johnson—the Affidavit of the Sea Captain.

It may seem strange to some of our readers that two such men as Edwards and Child should have adopted any ceremony in developing their rascally ideas to each other. It may appear that it would have been more natural in men so thoroughly acquainted with each other's characters, to have talked directly at the business in

hand, and have canvassed the question of the perjury upon its open merits or its open dangers.

But there is a pharisaism common to all degrees of knavery, and which shows itself as well in penal perpetrations as in religion or in politics.—A studied hypocrisy which refines the outside with the garb of virtue and involves the language with the show of honor, while it leaves the heart unsoftened of its corruption. Its constant use fixes it at last upon the very style of thought, and its ultimate result is the self deception of the user, in the sophistries of his own villany.

It would have been inexpressibly shock-



EDWARDS INTRODUCING THE PERJURY TO CHILD.

ing to the minds of two men like Child and Edwards, who had been trained in all the meretricious and fantastic notions of fashionable honor, to have debated the commission of a perjury with the same naked grossness with which the idea had been conceived. A man of the Colonel's high toned blandness and nicety of phrase, would never have allowed such rough shod syllables to have trampled the immaculate velvet of his lip; and Child, who was equally accustomed to the delicacies of intercourse, would have revolted with indignation at such a coarse invasion of that ceremonious reserve, or rather circumlocution, which he considered to be eminently

due between two gentlemen. It was necessary, therefore, to the proper operations of philosophers of this class, that there should be some slight fiction; some paper basis for the polished conscience to repose upon—some kind of method to slide the villany into the determinations in a well dressed metamorphosis, instead of letting it jump in headlong in its naked hideousness, to affright and disgust the fastidiousness of a well drilled mind.

For the necessary performance on this inclined plane of the sentiments, Edwards had devised the note to Child to which we have alluded, and he confidently calculated that when he came to hang the

shining reflector of the gold behind it, the refraction from the two, would let in a light upon that gentleman's memory, that would enable him to commit perjury almost without knowing it himself. It would, in short, be the intervention of a method which might not inappropriately be termed, perjury made easy.

It is inexpressibly amusing, notwithstanding the atrocity of the design in view, to observe the ceremonious duplicity of these two rogues in their attempt to sully themselves in relation to the true character of the business in hand, and to spread a thin varnish, or sort of caoutchouc covering over its most salient and appalling deformities. The spectacle is however, not so rare as to require a pen of our experience to devote any more space in this history, to its contemplation. The same atrocious duplicity and pharasaical dumb show, may be found to a certain extent in every walk in life—the smallest development and mildest forms being among the laboring classes, while the rankest color and most vicious type are most abundant among their representatives in Congress.

The same sordid villany and reaching wickedness which the forger and the petty swindler contrive to hide under the gloss of good manners and plausible address, is masked, by the representative, under the grave courtesies of debate.

The mouthful of fine words about "constitutional liberty" and the welfare of the masses, serve but to conceal some brutal design on the rights of the constituent, or some base and dirty scheme to plunder their "beloved country," at the hire of some speculator as knavish as themselves. But while all this is going on, the sound and pantomime of patriotism are never for an instant laid down, and at length, as in the case of all inveterate criminals, they come to believe that there is a sort of justification to their rascality in its very currency among their neighbors, and its apparent toleration by a People who have never been made vigilant by suspecting them of such immeasurable baseness. This common duplicity is probably the true reason why a portion of these people, after having performed some detestable piece of villany under the disguise of concern for the public good, have the advantage like the old soothsayers, of being able to look in each other's faces without laughing.

Child sat for a long time perfectly bewildered as he held the fraudulently dated invitation in his hand; but recover-

ing himself at length by a contemplation of the extreme perils he must encounter if he accepted of the forger's terms, he firmly determined not to touch the perjury. It was by no means inconsistent with this prudent resolution, however, that he should also resolve to deceive the Colonel with a pretended acquiescence, and on a little reflection, he soon persuaded himself that his pecuniary necessities would justify such a course of deception on his part, at that time. His face, therefore, was unshadowed with a doubt when he greeted the forger the next morning; while the latter's large blue eyes expanded with a serene gratification, that so important a necessity in his defence, had been successfully overcome.

There was one thing yet necessary to be done before the return of the commission and the re-appearance of his brother. That thing was, to have Child visit the Phillip's family in Philadelphia, and inform the two young ladies, Miss Lucy, and Miss Caroline his betrothed, that their testimony would be necessary to his defence; the dates in their register or account book being relied on to show that he, the accused, was in Philadelphia at periods inconsistent with his presence in Baltimore and Richmond when John P. Caldwell made his appearance there. The Colonel had written on this subject before, it was true, but he had as yet received no answer on which he could fix any certain hope, and he, therefore, considered it necessary that the Englishman should go on. The emissary returned at the end of four days, but whether his mission was satisfactory or not, the developments of the trial must explain.

On the 22d of May, the commission from Havana was returned with the testimony of Charles F. Johnson, as taken before the Consul of the United States at that port. With it, however, came a private letter from the Consul to the prosecution, and also a private affidavit, the purport and contents of which we must withhold for the present, or at any rate, until we first give to the reader the result of the investigation. As almost the entire matter of this examination is based upon the celebrated negro bond, the copy of that famous instrument which was produced by Charles F. Johnson on his examination, will facilitate a just appreciation of the force of the questions and replies. We desire the reader as he runs it through, to bear in mind that it was drawn and written by the hand of Monroe Edwards.

(A.)

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT.

Made and entered into at the city of Baltimore, Md., this second day of August, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and forty one (1841), between Charles F. Johnson, of Louisiana, of the one part, and Monroe Edwards, also of Louisiana, of the other part—Witnesseth:

Whereas, the said Charles F. Johnson and the said Monroe Edwards, have this day entered into partnership, commencing from the signing and sealing of these articles, and to be terminated on the first day of March, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven (1847). On the conditions, stipulations, and for the purpose herein after mentioned. The capital stock of said partnership is two hundred thousand dollars, as follows:—Said Johnson puts into said partnership, in cash fifty thousand dollars—(\$50,000,) and two hundred and fifty (250) negro slaves, creoles, of, and now in the Island of Martinique. Said slaves, by mutual agreement, are rated at two hundred dollars (\$200) each, and are accepted into this partnership at fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.) Said Edwards puts into said partnership ten and a half leagues, or fifty thousand acres of land, more or less, lying and being on the Red, Natchez, Angeline, San Jacinta, and Colorado Rivers, Texas, being the same lands purchased by said Edwards of Wm. B. P. Gaines, James W. Robinson, and Peyton R. Splane, and more particulary described in the deeds from said Gaines, Robinson and Splane to said Edwards. Said lands are by mutual agreement rated at two dollars (\$2) per acre, and are accepted into this partnership at one hundred thousand dollars (100,000.) The business of said partnership shall be conducted in the individual name of said Edwards.

And it is hereby further agreed, that the said Johnson is to pay into the hands of said Edwards, at or before the signing and sealing of these articles, the aforesaid sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in gold and silver, or the equivalent, in current bank notes, the receipt of the same being hereby acknowledged by said Edwards.

And it is further agreed, that the said Edwards is to invest the aforesaid sum, or any part thereof at his discretion in tobacco, the same to be shipped to St. Pierre, Martinique, on or before the first of November next, for account of said partnership. Said Edwards is to go out in person to St. Pierre, and is there to await the arrival of said Johnson.

And said Johnson hereby obligates himself to be at St. Pierre in all the months of January and February next, 1842, and then and there to deliver into the possession of said Edwards two hundred and fifty (250) negro slaves, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five years, to be creoles of Martinique, sound and healthy, and free from any blemish whatever. And it is further agreed that the said sum of fifty thousand dollars, or the proceeds of the tobacco purchased with the same, shall be invested in negro slaves,

creoles of Martinique, young and good subjects; and those thus purchased, together with those put into said partnership by said Johnson, shall be transferred to Texas, under the direction of said Edwards, and are to be settled on the lands belonging to said partners without delay, on one or more plantations, at the discretion of said Edwards. Said Edwards shall have the entire control and management of all the property belonging to the said partnership during its continuance, he shall have power to mortgage or hypothecate, at his discretion, any of the said lands or negroes, to create a fund sufficient to make all needful improvements on said plantations during the first year of their settlement. But said Edwards shall not sell any of said lands or negroes without the written consent of said Johnson.—Said Edwards shall have power to employ one or more overseers, gin wrights, and such other workmen as may be required to improve and carry on said plantations, he shall keep a set of books, in which the accounts of said partnership shall be kept, he shall devote his entire time and personal attention to the business of said partnership, and as a compensation for his services, he shall be paid three thousand dollars per annum out of the funds of said partnership, he shall reside permanently on said plantations; he may have a dwelling house erected on said plantations at the expense of said partnership, but the same to be furnished at his private charge. Said Edwards shall render an account current, and statement of the affairs of said partnership on the 1st of March, each year at the city of New Orleans. Profits to be divided annually. And it is further agreed, that said Edwards may apply to his individual use the sum of ten thousand dollars out of the said fifty thousand dollars this day paid into his hands, upon the express stipulation that he delivers on Red River on the plantations of said partnership prior to the first of June next, 1842, a stock of horses, mules, and cattle, equal in value to ten thousand dollars.—This partnership is to terminate, be settled, and the property divided in March 1847. And it is hereby expressly stipulated and agreed by both the said contracting parties, and the one with the other, that in the event of a non-compliance with these articles according to the letter and their true intent, and meaning, the party so failing to comply, hereby stipulates to pay to the other party fifty thousand dollars, which sum is expressly stipulated as damages and not a penalty.

And it is further agreed that if any such failure do occur, the party so failing shall forfeit all his rights under this contract, and the other party shall be for ever absolved from all the stipulations herein above writien. In testimony whereof we have hereunto set our hands, and affixed our seals in duplicate at the city of Baltimore this day and date first above written.

Witnesses, C. F. JOHNSON (Seal.)
F. M. ELDER, M. EDWARDS (Seal.)
D. MILLON.

Annexed to this Bond but after the signatures, was the Schedule (B.) describing the funds paid by Johnson to Edwards,

which we have already seen was prepared in the prisoner's cell, by himself and his brother Ashmore, immediately previous to the departure of the latter, from New York.

Next to this Schedule came the

DEPOSITION AND CROSS EXAMINATION OF
CHARLES F. JOHNSON.

As follows:—Interrogatories to be administered to Charles F. Johnson, of the Parish of Caddo, Louisiana, planter, expected to be at St. Thomas in the Island of St. Thomas in the West Indies, in St. Pierre, in the West Indies, or in Havana, in the Island of Cuba in the West Indies, a witness to be produced, sworn, and examined, under and by virtue of the annexed commission, in a certain cause now pending in the Court of Oyer and Terminer in and for the city and county of New York, wherein the People of the State of New York are plaintiffs, and Monroe Edwards is defendant, on the part and behalf of the defendant.

Q.—What is your name, age, residence, and occupation?

A.—My name is Charles F. Johnson; I am about forty years of age; I reside in Caddo parish in the State of Louisiana; I am an American, a trader and a planter.

Q.—Do you know Monroe Edwards the defendant in this cause? If yea, when, where, how long, in what circumstances, and in what relations have you known him?

A.—I became acquainted with him about thirteen years ago, in the State of Kentucky, under such circumstances as I became acquainted with others, at a hotel; I have known him in Texas; in Paris, and many places in the United States, under almost every variety of circumstances, and was frequently engaged in speculations with him in the United States and elsewhere.

Q.—When (if ever) and where did you last have an interview with the said Monroe Edwards?

A.—Either at Baltimore or Philadelphia, in the month of August, as near as I can recollect; on the second day of August last, we were in Baltimore together.

Q.—Have you or have you not ever entered, or proposed to enter into any agreement, connection, or partnership, with said Monroe Edwards, in any business, traffic, mercantile speculation, or enterprise, whatever?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If yea, when and where was such agreement, connection, or partnership, entered into or proposed? What was the nature of the business, traffic, enterprise, or speculation, for which it was entered into or proposed?

A.—A proposition was made in Paris and consummated in Baltimore; the document A, and the receipt B, will explain the nature of the business, and I pray that they may be taken as part of this answer.

Q.—Were the terms of such agreement, connection, or partnership, (if any) reduced to writ-

ting? Were they under seal? How many such writings were executed? What was done with them, and where are they or any of them now?

A.—Yes; and the document A exhibits the time; and the nature of the business transactions we were to engage in; I have a copy of the agreement, and Mr. Edwards has another, and there are no other articles of agreement between us; these are under seal; and were executed at the Eutaw House in Baltimore, written in a room occupied by Mr. Edwards, and witnessed in the said house by the barkeepers.

Q.—Is any such writing or any counterpart, duplicate, or copy of such writing in your possession, or under your control? If so, produce the original and annex it or a copy of it to your deposition?

A.—That is already in my fifth and sixth answer, and the copy attached.

Q.—Have you ever paid to or deposited with said Monroe Edwards, any money, monied securities, or valuable property, in pursuance of and for the purpose of such agreement, connection, or partnership, or in pursuance of any other agreement, connection, or partnership? or with any object, or for any purpose whatever? If so, state particularly the time, place, and circumstances of such payment or deposit, the amount, character and description of such money, monied securities, property, and the object and purposes for which such payment or deposit was made?

A.—The receipt B, exhibits the amount furnished, which was fifty thousand dollars; the gold was principally American coin; some was in sovereigns; I cannot say whether there was Spanish or Mexican gold coins among it; I do not know what bank notes I delivered to Mr. Edwards; nor the denomination; I have no knowledge whatever of the description of the bank notes; the advance was made at Baltimore on the 2nd day of August last; no person was present at the time; for a more full answer, I again refer to the attached document marked B.

Q.—Do you know any other fact, circumstance, or thing to the advantage of the defendant in this suit? If so, state it particularly?

A.—I have known Monroe Edwards for many years, and believe him to be an honest, but persecuted man; I have never known him guilty of a dishonorable act, and until I arrive at such knowledge for myself, I will not believe him a guilty man.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

Q.—Where did you last see Monroe Edwards?

A.—I think in Philadelphia or New York—I think in the city first named.

Q.—When did you last see him?

A.—In the month of August last; the day not remembered.

Q.—Where did you first become acquainted with him?

A.—About twelve or thirteen years ago.

Q.—When did you first become acquainted with him?

A.—In Louisville, Kentucky.

Q.—How did you get acquainted with him?

A.—As I do with others at hotels.

Q.—If you answer the fourth direct interroga-

tory in the affirmative state, from whom came the first proposal for such arrangement?

A—I cannot say who made the first proposition.

Q—Where was such proposal made?

A—In Paris, at the American Hotel.

Q—When was it made?

A—I do not remember.

Q—What object had you in making such arrangement?

A—For the purpose of making money for myself, and advancing Mr. Edwards' interest.

Q—In what business were you engaged when you made such arrangement?

A—Not particularly engaged at that time in any business.

Q—If you say you were engaged in any business, how long have you been engaged in it?

A—I was formerly engaged as a planter and trader; but at that time I was engaged in no particular business.

Q—Where was it carried on?

A—In the parish of Caddo, Louisiana; in Yuacatan, and various other places.

Q—If you say you were engaged in no business, state how long it was since you had been engaged in any business?

A—I closed my business since the first day of January, 1841.

Q—What was such business?

A—As a planter and trader.

Q—Where was it carried on?

A—My planting business was carried on in the parish of Caddo, State of Louisiana; my trading operations in Louisville, Kentucky, Santa Fe, Yucatan, sometimes up Red River, and in many other places, wherever I thought I could make money.

Q—How long had you been engaged in it?

A—I think about eighteen years.

Q—If you say any arrangement or agreement with Monroe Edwards was reduced to writing, state who wrote the same?

A—Monroe Edwards wrote the contract.

Q—When was it written?

A—I think on the second of August last.

Q—Where was it written? in what place and house?

A—It was written at the Eutaw House, in Baltimore, in Mr. Edwards' room, and witnessed in said house by the bar-keepers.

Q—Who has seen the same besides said Edwards and yourself?

A—I do not know that the articles of agreement have been seen by others than the parties to it and the witnesses.

Q—When were you last in Philadelphia?

A—I think in the month of August last.

Q—By what route did you travel when you left Philadelphia?

A—By the Western route, down by Pittsburg and the Mississippi river.

Q—Where were you when the arrangement (if any) was made with the said Edwards?

A—In Baltimore, at the Eutaw House, where the articles of agreement were drawn up by Mr. Edwards.

Q—How long had you been there?

A—But a few days—time not remembered.

Q—Where did you reside before going there?

A—In Louisiana, but frequently absent, engaged in my trading operations.

Q—If you say, in answer to the eighth direct interrogatory, that you ever paid or deposited with said Edwards any money, state the several days on which you paid or deposited with him such money?

A—On the same day that the articles of agreement were executed, and on the day of the date of the receipt.

Q—Where did you procure the same? Give in detail the person or persons from whom you received the same, with their residence and occupation?

A—I am not disposed to answer this question, as no man has a right to require me to make a manifest of my various transactions.

Q—On what account were such moneys received by you? State fully and in detail?

A—I am not disposed to answer this question.

Q—If you say such moneys or any of them were received by you in payment of any debt or debts, state fully and in detail the origin of each debt, the name, residence, and occupation of the debtor, and the date of its creation?

A—To this question, I am not disposed to give an answer.

Q—If you say, said moneys or any of them were the proceeds of the sale or exchange of any moneyed securities or other property, state fully and in detail from whom you received such moneyed securities and other property, give the name, residence, and occupation of the person or persons from whom you received the same?

A—I am not disposed to answer this question.

A—Describe fully and without detail such securities or other property?

A—I have no answer to make to this question.

Q—When did you receive such securities or other property? give the date of receipt of each.

A—I have no answer to make to this question.

Where did you receive the same? tell the place where you received each.

A—I will not answer this question.

Q—How came the same to be in your possession?

A—I will not answer this question.

B—How did such funds come in your possession?

A—By trading, and by my occupation.

Q—Did the said Edwards ever give you any receipts for any moneys or securities delivered to him by you? If yea, when and where?

A—On the second of August last, at the Eutaw House in Baltimore.

Q—If in answer to the direct interrogatories, you say that you engaged in any enterprise or business with the said Edwards, state what capital (if any) was to be invested in such enterprise or business?

A—Each agreed to put in fifty thousand dollars in money and property.

Q—Who was to furnish such capital? State the portions to be furnished by each party.

A—The answer to a previous interrogatory is the answer to this question.

Q—Was, or were any other person or persons to be connected with it, besides you and the said Edwards? If so, give the name, residence, and occupation of such person or persons.

A—No other person was interested, but such as acted as agents or clerks.

Q—When were you last in New Orleans?

A—I think in November last.

Q—How long did you remain in Mrs. Philips' boarding house in Philadelphia after the arrest of said Edwards?

A—I was never in Mrs. Phillips' house.

Q—Have you had any letter or other communication from the said Edwards since you left Philadelphia?

One at Sisal, and another at Havana—a copy of each is hereto attached marked C. and D.

Q—Has not the said Edwards communicated to you that you would be examined as a witness for him, under a commission of suits now pending?

A—I have received no other communications than the two mentioned in my answer to the previous question.

Q—Has he not informed you what facts he desired to have sustained by your testimony?

A—He has not.

Q—Have you not been employed by the said Edwards to sell or get exchanged any bank bills, checks or bills of exchange? If yea—when and where, and to what amount?

A—Never—never.

Q—If you say you ever paid to or deposited with the said Edwards any moneys or monied securities, had not such moneys and securities, or some part of the same been received by you either directly or indirectly from the said Edwards?

A—I Never received a cent of it from Mr. Edwards.

Q—Had they not or some of them ever been in the possession of the said Edwards before you handed them to him?

A—No: not a dollar of it.

Q—Were not they, or some of them, the proceeds of money, monied securities, or other property once in the possession of the said Edwards?

A—No: not a dollar of it.

Q—How long have you known the said Edwards?

A—Some twelve or thirteen years ago.

Q—Has the said Edwards delivered or caused to be delivered to you any money within the last year? If yea, state fully and in detail, when, where, and what amounts?

A—Not a dollar, to the best of my recollection.

Q—For what purpose did he deliver such money?

A—He never delivered any.

Q—What have you done with the same?

A—Nothing.

Q—Have you ever, during the last three years been engaged in any business, enterprise, or undertaking with the said Edwards? If yea, state fully what, when, and where?

A—No transaction whatever, with the exception of that agreed upon on the 2d of August last, at the Eutaw House.

Q—When were you last in New York?

A—In the month of August last.

Q—What was your business when last there?

A—A trip of pleasure.

Q—Have you been in New York with the said Edwards during the last year? If yea, at what times and at what hotel or other-house did you stop?

A—I have not; but it is possible I may be mistaken; I think I stopped at the Waverly House. It was in the month of August.

Q—In what place have you resided during the last eighteen months?

A—I have no fixed place of residence for the last eighteen months, having been travelling the greater part of the time.

Lastly—Do you know of any other matter or thing, or can you say any thing that can tend to the benefit of the people in this cause, besides what you have stated in your answers to the preceeding interrogatories? If yea, declare the same fully and at large as if you had been particularly interrogated thereto?

A—I have no further answer to make.

Allowed subject to all legal exceptions.
(signed)

By the respective Counsel.

This completed the body of the commission, but endorsed upon it was the following certificate of the Consul.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, HAVANA.

I, I. S. Calhoun, Consul of the United States of America, do hereby certify.

That at the request of Mr. Felix Argenti, I requested Charles F. Johnson to declare at what time he left the United States, from what port he sailed, and in what vessel, so as to trace him from *home to this place*. He answered that he left Charleston, So. Carolina, about a month ago—Did not remember the name of the vessel—and had no further answer to make. That no one had a right to such information—and that he would not give it to any one, for any purpose.

In testimony whereof, I hereunto set my hand, and affix my seal of office, at Havana, this 9th day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and of the Independence of the United States, the sixty-sixth.

I. S. CALHOUN.

In addition to this endorsement, came the private letter of the Consul to which we have before alluded, in which both himself and the Commissioner Argenti expressed their belief that Charles F. Johnson was a fraudulent character and a perjured man. Their reason for this conclusion, apart from the character of Johnson's testimony, was the fact, that no such

man as he had been lying sick in Havana, as the affidavit on which the commission had been obtained had stated. Indeed, he had not arrived in Havana until the commission was about to be returned unsatisfied, when on the 9th of May, a person calling himself Charles F. Johnson, suddenly presented himself before the Consul and demanded to be examined.

These were strong circumstances, but inside the letter of the Consul was a document, the separate force of which reduced all that had gone before to the condition of minor points.

This was the affidavit of an old American sea Captain, who happening to catch a glimpse of Mr. Charles F. Johnson as he passed through the Consul's office on the morning of the investigation, recollected him at once as an old acquaintance whom he had known for several years in Texas. Though he had no chance to speak to him at the moment, he took occasion to mention the recognition to the Consul.

It was at the end of this brief conversation between the Captain and the Consul, that the former made the affidavit which the latter had sent to the prosecution along with the commission.

The affidavit stated, that Charles F. Johnson was ASHMORE EDWARDS, the brother of Monroe Edwards, the defendant in the case, both of whom the deponent testified that he had known for many years in Texas.

Ignorant of this secret information against him, and blindly relying on the representations which he had impressed upon his counsel, of the entire integrity of the Johnson business, the Colonel, considered himself ready for trial. Indeed, it was necessary that he should be so, for it lacked but a few days to the commencement of the June term.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Trial Morning—Appearance of the Court—Reception of the Prisoners by the Crowd—the First Day's Testimony.

Eight months had now elapsed since the period of the forger's arrest; nine, since he had appeared in Baltimore and Richmond as the showy and plausible Arkansas planter. The condition of things, and of his prospects were vastly different after his long imprisonment than at that shining period, but his pride and buoyant self-reliance held the shadows still at bay, and on the morning of the trial, the 6th June, he looked more like a bridegroom ready to lead a blushing mistress to her nuptial

couch, than a gladiator to grapple with grim destiny for the choice of a hereafter.

There was no misgiving in his soul.—There was simply irritation at his detention and wrath at those who caused it.—But even these passions were concealed, and on the smooth surface of his imperturbable calm no expression rested, but a glossy self-conceit. His calculations were all made. In the eight months during which he had been enclosed in prison walls, his nimble intellect had ranged through the whole field that lay open to his case, and had picked up every grain that could be applied in the fabric of his defense. It seemed that there was nothing left to do, and dreaming that his castle of sand was a tower of invulnerable strength, he felt rather an impatience for the hour of his triumph, than a shrinking as from the ordeal of peril. As yet there was no spare room for distrust in his inflated mind. Had he known the pains the prosecution had taken to tumble his elaborate card work down, to puff away his misleading castles in the air, he would not have hummed so gaily on the trial morning as he arranged his tasteful toilet for the day's display, nor would he have so despised that compromise with the complainants, which had been faintly hinted at by one of his counsel.

Had he have seen the witnesses who had been drawn from all points to identify him as Caldwell; the brokers of the two Southern cities, the boy Hanson, the treasurer of St. Mary's College in Baltimore, the Alexandrian clerk and the Baltimore cashier; had he anticipated the production of the fatal bag found in his trunk and which he had forgotten was still there, the detection of the false letter stamp, and the discovery of the fatal "*fieu*" which ran through all his letters, whether forged or otherwise, confidence would have shrunk to apprehension, and instead of the chirping "good morning" with which he greeted all his visitors as he was about leaving the prison, his rosy cheek would have been sad with yellow care, and his saucy elasticity of step would have changed into a nervous and uncertain tread.

Long before the hour appointed for the opening of the Court, the room was crowded to suffocation, and those who could not obtain admission were choking up the aisles and buzzing in loitering bands about the lower vomitories of the Great Hall.—Now and then a policeman or two would cut a passage for a shining train of ladies, but no sooner had they glided past, than the sweaty crowd closed in upon their wake, like a press of turbid waters after

the pile of soft white foam that curls over on the wounded wave.

At length a general buzz denoted an approach of more than ordinary interest. The crowd in the upper aisles heard the rush of feet up the center and side stairs, with the sharp angry cries of "stand back there! stand back!" from the hustled officers mingling with the confusion. At the signal, the crammed mass rose on tiptoe and swayed to and fro in feverish agitation. The audience in the Court room, catching the infection from the stir outside, rose upon their feet and riveted their eyes upon the door. For a moment, the crowd in the aisles had the advantage. They were to have the first sight at the wonderful forger whose fame had so filled the world. Closer and closer did they press to the side walls as the tramp which echoed from under the shaking forest of staves that surrounded the prisoner, approached; and when at length the advancing phalanx came driving in between them, they overflowed upon one another's shoulders.

It was a sight worth climbing to see.— Ahead came two stout officials, thrusting and hewing and picking with their long gilded batons, a tunnel through the mass; then came a reeking phalanx with puffed cheeks and angry eyes, which showed the struggle they had undergone to keep their order. Behind this line, backed by a rear guard, and honored on each side by a stalwart string, came the prisoner, completely free from obnoxious contact, and in a square to himself.

As that elegant figure, that cold calm eye, that dignity of bearing, that careless grace and ease which seemed to be the prerogatives alone of honor, were contrasted by the eager lookers-on with the temper of the fretted circle that surrounded the forger, the unwary bosom of every observer was robbed of a kind wish, and in keeping with the impulse, a murmur of applause followed the strange hero till he reached the door. There it stopped, and when the prisoner passed into the Court, he softened the smile of acknowledgement with which he received the tribute, into one of mild composure, befitting the occasion. Leaving the officers at the threshold, he marched straight to his counsel, as though he himself were one of the members of the Court, and took his seat beside them.

Here they were, a shining galaxy of genius and brilliant station, fraternizing with cheerful eyes and open, greedy palms with the handsome financier, and involuntarily giving a practical lesson in liberty

and equality, by relinquishing those tyrannous distinctions so common among mere honest people, against all enlightened professors of liberal doctrines in finance and property. Small wonder then, that when the ladies saw the Hon. Senator Crittenden, the Hon. Representative Tom Marshall, the distinguished Messrs. Emmett and Evarts, making this formal recognition of the qualities of talent, that their tender bosoms should have minced the matter as little, and have quietly paid the same tribute under their stomachs, to the equalities of beauty.

The ladies, however, had not required such an example to prompt their sympathies. They had all stood predisposed to the Colonel on the score of the dashing reputation which the newspapers had given him in matters of gallantry. On the part of the fraternizing counsel, it is proper for us to add also, that they declared that previous to the trial they believed their client innocent. If so, or whether so or not, his duplicity and deception in withholding from them the actual dangers of his case, was from this moment, to betray them to a dark and yawning gulf to which their order of battle was to be broken, and their scattered forces left no light to grope back into their ranks and make head against the compact and well accoutered enemy.

Judge Kent having taken his seat and two hours having been consumed in empanelling a jury, George F. Allen, one of the lawyers of the merchants, arose and opened the case on the part of the prosecution. He detailed the history of the forgeries in a clear, succinct and able manner, and having promised to prove to the jury, by an irrefragable chain of testimony, every movement of the forger, from the writing of the Hugh S. Hill letter down to the collections of the drafts on the name of John P. Caldwell, he commenced to call his witnesses.

The Hugh S. Hill letter of the forger, on which the signature of Maunsel, White & Co., was obtained by Edwards, was put in, and Robert Shaw of that firm, testified to having received it in New Orleans on the 19th of the same month, and to having answered it on the 24th. This answer was directed to the Exchange Hotel at Baltimore, according to Mr. Hill's request.

Mr. Kieckhoefer, the confidential clerk and correspondent of the house of Brown, Brothers & Co., of New York, was called to the stand and testified that on the 23d August, he received, among other letters that laid on his desk from the post office

that morning, a letter dated August 10th, purporting to be signed by Maunsel, White & Co., of New Orleans, recommending their friend Mr. Caldwell, and advising that as they held some \$50,000 worth of cotton in their hands, an advance to that gentleman to the amount of \$30,000 would be duly honored by them, &c. Mr. K. next testified that on the 27th of the same month, he received a letter dated at Alexandria, Aug. 25th, signed "John P. Caldwell." This letter alluded to the previous one of Maunsel, White & Co., and asked for a loan of \$25,000 on the cotton of the writer, in the hands of that firm. Mr. Caldwell expressed his sorrow that he could not come to New York in person, being detained by the illness of a nephew whom he hourly expected to expire, and whom he therefore could not leave. He must, however, have the money at once, as he had made arrangements for the immediate purchase of some slaves for his plantation in Arkansas. He therefore enclosed two drafts in \$13,000 each on his friends in New Orleans, and an order for the entire cotton in their hands, either of which, he left it at the option of Messrs. B. B. & Co., to choose as security for the money which he hoped they would transmit him at Alexandria by return of mail. On the 28th, Mr. Keickhoefer answered this letter on the part of Messrs. B. B. & Co., and sent within it the checks and drafts (which we have heretofore described) to the amount of \$25,019. "In four days afterward, said the witness, "came Mr. Caldwell's answer, dated Fredericksburg, Va., Sept. 1st, acknowledging the receipts of the drafts and checks and thanking Messrs. B. B. & Co. for their prompt attention to his wishes." This closed Mr. Keickhoefer's testimony.

The basis of the story having now been laid out, it was necessary to call a witness who could describe the current of the sequel, and at the same time testify to Caldwell's handwriting, so that the letters referred to by Keickhoefer could be read in evidence. For this double purpose—

Mr. C. C. Jamieson, the Cashier of the Bank of Baltimore was called to the stand. Mr. Jamieson testified that on the morning of the 31st August, a person calling himself John P. Caldwell, presented himself at the counter of his bank and applied to have cashed a ten thousand dollar check drawn by the bank of New York, in his favor. It was refused unless he could identify himself, whereupon, after some complaining, he went out, and after an absence of about an hour, returned with Mr. George Brown of Baltimore, an agent

of B. B. & Co. of New York. This gentleman gave Mr. Jamieson to understand, that the business was all right, whereupon the check was cashed. I had never seen Mr. Caldwell before that day, said Mr. Jamieson, and but twice since; once at the Tombs in October last, and now, sitting there before me! "That person, added the witness, showing an earnestness which betrayed a slight excitement, "*that person there is John P. Caldwell!*" and he levelled his finger slowly and fixedly upon the prisoner.

A buzz ran through the court; the spectators raised and settled in their seats; a momentary paleness flickered over the cheeks of the most susceptible of the fair auditors, while a flush of mortification tinged the brows of the prisoner's counsel. As for the Colonel, he was thrown momentarily off his guard by the impression which the allegation seemed to make on others rather than on account of its intrinsic force, or of its bearing on the case.—He colored to the eyes and commenced chewing bits of paper which he nipped from the ends of a pamphlet on the table, but being recalled to a sense of his condition by the hot flush of the crimson tell-tale that was mantling on his temples, he suddenly took a glass of water, and by a violent effort regained his outward composure. Two of his counsel leaned simultaneously towards him, and after a close whisper of a moment, the Colonel aided the conference with the expression, "Oh, its merely the force of his imagination brought to bear in a foregone conclusion; and then relapsed into his former ease.

On being cross-examined, Mr. Jamieson stated, that he had recognized Caldwell on his visit to the Tombs among a room full of people, and told the officers who were going out on pretence of bringing in the prisoner, that they might spare themselves the trouble, for Mr. Caldwell was already there. He further stated that Edwards had endorsed the \$10,000 check in his presence, and from that fact, and his subsequent close and frequent examination of the signature, he felt satisfied he could swear to his handwriting. The letters spoken of by Keickhoefer were then shewn him, as were likewise various others, and on his affirming them to be all in the hand writing of the prisoner, who signed the check in his presence, the Caldwell series, including the one signed H. S. Hill to Maunsel, White & Co., were put in.

A profound silence existed while these documents were read, but when in the reply of Brown, B. & Co., which enclosed

the drafts, came to the sentence "*We feel much obliged to Maunsel, White & Co., for the pleasure of your correspondence,*" an uncontrollable roar of laughter burst from the audience, in which the prisoner himself took part, by a smile of inimitable drollery. This sentiment having been checked by the court, the prosecution proceeded with their case.

Robert M. Ludlow, of Baltimore, of the firm of Ludlow, Parshall & Co., brokers, was the next witness. He testified that on the morning of 31st August a handsome man about 30 years of age, calling himself John P. Caldwell, came into his office in Baltimore, and taking a \$1,600 draft from his pocket, endorsed and presented it, and witness paid it. He wanted also to get \$5,000 of other money changed in gold to purchase negroes with, but witness could not furnish it. *That is John P. Caldwell!* concluded Mr. Ludlow winding up with the same impressive motion which had been made by Mr. Jamieson.

On his cross-examination, Mr. Ludlow stated that he had at first refused to cash the draft for Caldwell unless that person could identify himself, but having seen a letter from Brown, B. & Co. which he carried in his pocket, and listened to his plausible relation, he consented. He further stated that Caldwell at that time was dressed in a blue body coat with bright buttons, light pantaloons and a black hat. He had then no whiskers under his chin, though now they run all around. They were not so umbrageous, neither were they so black.

William Miles, of the firm of E. Mickle & Co., of Baltimore, testified to the cashing of the \$3,305 check for Caldwell, and like Jameison and Ludlow, testified that *the prisoner was the man.* Caldwell had entered his office as early as 9 o'clock in the morning, at which time he described him as being dressed in a dark frock coat, a sort of mixed pantaloons; but the hat he could not bear in mind. He recollected distinctly, however, that his whiskers then only came down to the jaw-bone and were not so dark and flourishing as now. The likeness of Caldwell was impressed upon his mind because his general appearance had reminded him of two persons he had seen in Florence and Peru.

Edward Ing, of Baltimore, clerk to Carter, Mortimore & Co., brokers of that city was the next witness sworn. He testified that, on the morning of the 31st August, Caldwell came into his employer's office with a \$1000 draft. He would have paid it but Mr. Carter required a reference.—

Mr. Caldwell thereupon explained that

he was a stranger, and after some further conversation with Mr. Carter, went out. He returned in a half an hour, though witness was not then in the office, but as he had understood the draft was paid.— The witness concluded his direct testimony by pointing at the prisoner with an exclamation of, "*That is the gentleman!*"

In his cross-examination, he stated that he bore Caldwell in mind because he was a remarkably fine looking man, and his whole appearance was unusual. He had been puzzled to know whether the handsome stranger "was a merchant or broker, or what; it was somewhat remarkable for so handsome a man to buy negroes, (which Caldwell said was his object in wanting gold,) as those who buy negroes are generally a pretty low looking set." The witness finally described the dress of Caldwell to have been black from hat to boots, and stated that his whiskers, at that time, were not well out.

The several checks and drafts which the above named witnesses had testified to, were all regularly introduced upon the records of the court, that Mr. Keickhoefer might subsequently recognize them as the papers sent by him to Caldwell on the part of Brown, B. & Co., and Mr. Jameison at the conclusion of the testimony of Mr. Ing, was called to recognize Caldwell's endorsement on the \$1000 check as being in the same hand writing, as the one which he had paid.

It being now late in the evening, the court adjourned until the following day at 1 o'clock.

Edwards had enough to ponder on that night. The drama had opened gloomily, but as yet no mine had been sprung to sap the strength of his defence. The witnesses had sworn rather more positively than he calculated, but he must increase the urgency of his conflicting testimony in proportion. This brought him to think of Child; and in thinking of him and of the threads that he was to stretch from him, to other points, to enmesh and involve any straggling doubts that might issue from the jury box, he sank to sleep.

In the morning Child came, but with a woful face. He had heard the testimony of the previous day, and weighed it heavier than his buoyant comrade. The Colonel probed him adventurously and deep, but the Englishman had but very little comfort to impart. The Colonel in the increasing desperation of his purpose spoke of Winfree, but on being told that that person had cheaply forsworn himself a few days before, on the murder trial of young Cook, in Brooklyn, he was set aside as

unavailable at once. While this conference was yet going on, the officers came to summon the prisoner that it was time to be at court, whereupon the Colonel bade his friend a brief good morning with an emphatic expression, that he would calculate upon *him* positively, and at any rate, when the defence should open.

The Englishman left the cell never to return to it again. Though dishonest, he was not utterly depraved; and the small temptation had not force enough to overturn the remaining empire which conscience still faintly held within his breast.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The second day—Progress of the identification—Testimony of the boy Hanson—The contents of the trunks—The false statements.

The avenues to the court room were this day more crowded even than before, and when the door was opened, the rush of the throng to get inside was so impetuous, as to bear down and completely overthrow the officers in charge. In five minutes every seat and every available standing place was filled, and after the lapse of another five minutes, during which the audience adjusted their rumpled garments and spunged their streaming cheeks, every thing had subsided into that decent and solemn decorum which befits the penetralia of Justice.

At ten o'clock precisely came the Judge and Aldermen, and following the signal of their presence, the officers brought in the prisoner. The Colonel, with the exception of a tasteful change of dress, looked just as he did on the previous day. He marched along with the same easy nonchalance, and as he walked up to his counsel, he saluted them with the same polished self-possession which had caused such favorable remarks before. Indeed, he seemed to experience a pleasure in the interest which he created, and acted as though he felt that he was rather a hero than a culprit.

After having exchanged the compliments of the morning with his counsel, and displayed his handsome teeth to the best advantage in a brief interval of lively chat, he settled himself back in his chair and took a serene survey of the entire audience. His next movement was to take a letter from his pocket; and well he knew as he smiled through its perusal, that each member of the auditory was nudging his next neighbor to observe the

heroic ease which he maintained, in despite of every thing that frowned against him.

Some interruptions in the arrangements of the court lengthened this little interlude, but at length the jurors having all taken their seats, the court was regularly opened.

John H. Montague, a clerk in the Exchange Bank of Richmond was then called to the stand. Mr. Montague testified that on the 2d day of September, a gentlemanly looking man calling himself John P. Caldwell, had come into the Exchange Bank in Richmond and presented a check to the cashier. He saw the same person in another bank, in twenty minutes afterwards. The cashier in his own bank had at first refused to cash the check without a reference, but on Caldwell speaking a few words, he consented, and gave him the money. "*That person is Mr. Caldwell,*" said the witness pointing toward Edwards, who was at that moment leaning over to Mr. Evarts.

The witness, on cross examination, described Caldwell as having had shorter whiskers when in Richmond than now, these ornaments at the present time, not having come lower than the jaw.

Robert H. Maury—broker and lottery dealer in Richmond, described Caldwell's application to him on the 2d September, at his office in Richmond, to obtain the cashing from 3,000 to 4,000 dollars worth of drafts. He likewise related his own original hesitation, on the score of his ignorance of Caldwell, but final acquiescence in consequence of the stranger's gentlemanly manner and apparent urgency of business. The interview was a long one, and Mr. Maury recollected his visitor exactly. After giving the same description of him as had all the previous witnesses, he turned to the prisoner and after a brief pause, said slowly and positively, "*That is the man.*"

The affidavit of J. Burton Smith, a clerk of the Farmer's Bank of Va. in Richmond was here introduced and read. It described the character of four paid checks which were on file in the bank, bearing the endorsement of John P. Caldwell.

A similar affidavit by Richard Archer, of the Bank of Virginia, Richmond, was likewise put in.

John L. Clendenning, keeper of the Washington Hotel in Richmond was then called. This witness testified that the prisoner before him, arrived at his house in Richmond from the northern train, at half past eleven o'clock at night, and entered his name on the register, which was

a new one just opened that day, as "John P. Caldwell, La." After breakfast on the following morning, he had inquired where he should find the banker, and went out a little before nine o'clock. He came back to dinner and tea, and went away the next morning in the early train, before witness was up. *The prisoner is the man*, repeated Clendenning, looking towards Edwards, who meeting the motion, riveted his eyes fixedly upon those of the witness, though his countenance did not betray the movement of a muscle. In his cross examination, Clendenning described Caldwell as having been dressed in a black frock coat and dark mixed pants particularized by other witnesses, and he also agreed with them that his whiskers had been allowed to grow much more umbrageously than they were at that time.

Mr. George Brown, of the Baltimore agency of Brown, Brothers & Co., the gentleman whom Caldwell had persuaded to watch for him with Mr. Jamieson, of the Bank of Baltimore, was next called to the stand. He related Mr. Caldwell's visit to them. He spoke likewise of that gentleman's production of the letters of the New York firm to show that he was in legitimate correspondence with them, and he likewise stated the fact that he was aware of the Caldwell correspondence, from a note which he had received a few days before from the house in New York, asking the character of Maunsel, White & Co., as they were about entering into a transaction to the extent of about \$26,000 with Mr. Caldwell their friend.

Thus predisposed, the witness said that he had felt a very natural sympathy for Mr. Caldwell, who between the illness of his nephew, and the urgency of his affairs, seemed surrounded with embarrassments. He had therefore cheerfully accompanied him back to the Bank of Baltimore, and gave Mr. Jamieson assurance that "it was all right." *"The prisoner is the gentleman,"* said Mr. Brown, nodding towards the Colonel at the conclusion of his testimony.

As each of the foregoing witnesses in turn identified the prisoner, the counsel for the defence looked inquiringly at each other, and after brief exchanges of this character, would turn and hold short consultations with the prisoner. This had been the case on each of the occasions when the other witnesses had so promptly and positively exclaimed, *"That is the man."* By the time they had disposed of Mr. Brown, the lawyers had discovered that they had been disingenuously dealt by, and that the duplicity of their client

had betrayed them into difficulties of which they had never dreamed. It would have been no more than fair retaliation, had they here thrown up the case and left him at the mercy of his arch-enemies upon the other side, but their professional pride was enlisted in the fight; and besides, the object of their chagrin was too weak and helpless to make him worthy of even a passive retribution.—They continued therefore to contrive on, and to manage the struggle purely as a scientific problem, their interest being now confined entirely to the workings of the game; and the prisoner and his fate being considered no further than the slate and pencil necessary to the calculations. They played at a disadvantage, but the worst was not yet come. It was at hand however, and it came in the shape of the boy

John W. Hanson, the clerk of Johnson & Son, of Baltimore, who had cashed the \$494.25 draft for Mr. Caldwell on the 21st of August. "The gentleman," said the witness after Mr. Johnson had agreed to cash the draft, "requested Virginia money in exchange, but said that he would prefer gold as he wished to purchase negroes with it. We offered him sovereigns and American gold, but he pushed back the former and reserved only the half eagles, which amounted to about fourteen hundred dollars. I put this gold into a shot bag, made of linen and stamped with the mark of the house.—J & LEE. He took the bag away with him. *The prisoner is the person.* I should know the bag again as I mark all the bags myself."

The District Attorney here handed the witness two bags of much the same appearance and asked the witness if he could say whether either of those was the bag he spoke of.

"This is the one," said the boy, holding up the bag marked J & LEE, "and these are my marks."

This was a thunderclap even for Edwards. It flashed upon his memory that he had forgotten to destroy this fatal tell-tale of his guilt, and for the moment it seemed to him that he was lost. His color left him, and for an instant his lips moved as if stirred with a secret curse at his own besotted carelessness. The paroxysm however, soon passed off, and the forger was as placid as before. The counsel who had been equally startled, were obliged to compose themselves in an equally stoical manner.

Mr. Marshall cross-examined Hanson, but tried in vain to involve and compromise

his answers. The most that he got out of him to soften and qualify his former declarations was, that though he could not swear positively that the bag produced, was the *very* bag he had given to Caldwell, yet it was one of Johnson & Lee's bags, and such a one as had been given by him to the forger.

Before the defence had time to fairly recover the stunning effect of *Hanson's* testimony, *Lewis Tappan* was called to the stand to identify the Caldwell letters, by comparison with those of Edwards, of which, as the reader is aware, he had several in his possession.

Mr. Tappan, on being sworn, related the intercourse which had existed between him and the prisoner two years before on the subject of the emancipation of the latter's slaves, and in relation to the transaction with the English government. He likewise described the visits of Edwards to his store, and of his connection with the handsome yellow boy who afterwards turned out to be the Texan's mistress, in a male disguise. (This subjected the Colonel to some hard looks from the ladies, but with the exception of a slight, momentary and scarcely perceptible curl of contempt upon his upper lip, he did not betray the emotion of a muscle.) *Mr. Tappan* was then asked to scrutinize several letters that were handed to him for examination, and having done so, he identified them all, as being in the hand writing of Monroe Edwards. When he left the stand, Edwards cast on him a look of ineffable contempt; a look, which to the keen observer did not intend so much to imply a doubt of his veracity, as to express the profound disgust of treachery and betrayal from an old accomplice.

Richard Vaux, the Recorder of Philadelphia, the main and most important witness for the prosecution, was then called to the stand. The Philadelphian commenced by describing the arrest of Edwards at the house of Mrs. Phillips, which was the occasion when his acquaintance with him first began. He testified that he had conducted Edwards to prison, and taken possession of his trunks. In the large white one, marked "M. Edwards La." the key of which the prisoner had given him, he had found the bag marked J & LEE, sworn to by the boy Hanson.—The bag contained in it at that time a number of pieces of American gold, several large packages of bank notes and gold in the trunk, the largest of which was tied in a handkerchief, and amounted to \$31,800. In all, there was \$44,054 03. Between five and six thousand of this was

gold—partly in sovereigns—and the remaining \$37,000 in Baltimore and Richmond notes. There were also in his trunk 16 shirts, 16 handkerchiefs, 3 coats, and 4 vests; 4 pair of boots, 1 blue sash, 1 seal with coat of arms; a gold watch and chain; two breast pins; a pair of spectacles with blue glasses; a bill of exchange, dated May 31st, 1840, on William and James Brown & Co. of London, for £623, supposed to be a forgery; and likewise a draft Sept. 8th, 1840, drawn by Prime, Ward & King, for £255.50. This was the third of exchange, sent as an atonement to the Earl Spencer. Another trunk made still more fearful revelations. Its contents were 14 pair of pantaloons; 4 vests; 3 coats; 1 cloak; 1 blouse; 1 six barrelled pistol; 1 pair of bullet moulds; 1 powder flask, containing powder and bullets; 1 stomach pump; 1 book; 1 money belt; 1 pair suspenders; 1 napkin; 1 box of cologne; 1 bottle of hair dye, and one tin box containing *stamps and type*. The stamps were of two kinds, one being round like the circular Post Office stamp, and the other long, like the straight stamp that marks the letters "PAID." To prove that these types had been thrown into a viscious combination, there was a piece of rag that bore the imprint of "LA."—"AUG." and the word "PAID." The letters forming the "AUG," were still in the circular stamp. They were stained with dark blue ink as were the edges of the circular stamp. In fact, the face of all the type were stained with dark blue ink except the four letters "PAID," which were touched with red according to the color used by the New Orleans Post Office for that mark.

"The round stamp," said *Mr. Vaux* at this part of his testimony, "*fits the circular one on the outside of the letter to Brown Brothers & Co., of the 10th August, purporting to come from Maunsell White & Co. whereas the regular New Orleans Post Office stamp, which I have procured from Louisiana, does not fit the mark on the letter. The letters "PAID" and "AUG." though they bear the same general appearance as the New Orleans Post Office marks, are not the same. They fit however, exactly on the forged letter to Brown Brothers & Co."*

This testimony created the utmost excitement in court. It had absorbed the breathless audience; it had bewildered the counsel for the defence, and it had struck consternation in the heart of the prisoner. When the witness made a momentary pause at the conclusion of his statement, a fluttering took place in all parts of the room, which being joined in by

the lawyers, completely suspended proceedings for a few moments.

By a powerful effort, the almost choking forger recalled the fugitive color to his cheek, and hoarsely told his counsel as they questioned him in a tone half indignant with reproach, that "the whole thing was a contrivance, and without credit or foundation, as they would find before they got much farther."

At this moment a rap from the bench recalled the counsel to their propriety, and the prosecution summoned Mr. Vaux, who had not yet left the stand, to produce the tin box and the stamps. At this, the counsel for the defence sprang up and made strenuous objection. Their manner was marked with much excitement and they openly charged the prosecution with springing traps upon them, and with continually contriving to take them by surprise.

The prosecution complacent with their advantage calmly replied that their opponents' made a slight mistake. It was their client who had betrayed them, and who was now himself betrayed and taken by surprise, by one of those inevitable blunders which crime, however sharpened by genius and experience, is sure to blunder into.

The box and stamps and type were hereupon produced, and being passed from the lawyers to the jury were soon submitted to a rigid examination by the panel. They were then handed back and Mr. Vaux was put under cross-examination.—He re-stated all the particulars of the arrest; he mentioned the fact that the trunks were still in his custody, though the money was deposited in the Bank of North America, in Philadelphia, awaiting the decision of the case; that the type in the box would form the entire combination of the post office stamp "New Orleans, La., &c.;" and in reply to a question from Mr. Hoffman, he further stated that Edwards on his road to prison, had asked him quietly, if it were "the Texas forgery" on which he was arrested.

Various letters were next shown to Mr. Vaux, and as he had stated that he had seen Edwards write and knew his hand, he was asked if he could identify their character. He did so without the slightest hesitation, affirming the H. S. Hill letter the Caldwell letters, and the letter to Winfree containing the corroborative "flew" as being positively in the prisoner's hand, though with the exception of the latter, they were more or less disguised. The absoluteness of the Recorder's style of testimony somewhat nettled

the defence, and for the purpose of involving him with contradiction and to break the force of his decisiveness, Mr. Emmett drew from his pocket the letter to himself, which Edwards had forged in the Tombs, in the name of the Cashier of the New Orleans Bank. Not dreaming, ever so distantly, but that the letter was genuine, and written by the Cashier, he passed it up to Mr. Vaux, and directing him to look only at the superscription, inquired if he could say whose hand-writing *that* was in?

The Recorder looked at the characters for a moment and replied that he had no doubt it was in the hand-writing of Monroe Edwards.

Mr. Emmett smiled with secret satisfaction at his prospective triumph. Similar evidences of relief were given by the other counsel on his side, but the forger who had not been acquainted what the letter was, looked doubtful and perplexed.

"Do you feel certain of that, Mr. Vaux?" continued Mr. Emmett with an increasing blandness of tone.

"Yes sir."

"As certain sir, as you are in relation to the hand-writing of the letters which you have previously identified as having been written by the prisoner?"

"Yes sir."

"You have no hesitation then in *swearing* positively that you believe the letter you hold in your hand to have been written by Monroe Edwards?"

"Not the least!"

"That will do sir," said the counsel in a tone bordering upon fondness. "That will do, Mr. Recorder!"

"Let us see the letter!" exclaimed two of the counsel for the prosecution in a breath.

"It is your privilege gentlemen," said Mr. Emmett continuing his excessive blandness, "but I doubt if it will be to your profit. The letter is directed to myself, and is written by the Cashier of the Orleans bank, informing me of a sum of money deposited in that institution to the credit of the prisoner. Mr. Vaux's evidence in relation to it will test the value of his testimony in relation to other equally important points."

Mr. Vaux crowded up to the table of the prosecution and run his eye carefully over the letter. The anxiety of the prisoner which had evinced itself at the statement of Mr. Emmett visibly deepened.

The Recorder had colored slightly when Mr. Emmett had made his revelation.—He looked at the letter sharply and for a moment seemed puzzled; but regaining

confidence by a sudden thought, he reached for the tin box and for the genuine New Orleans Post Office stamps.

The prisoner watched him with the most intense anxiety. The letter was doing more work than he had bargained for. If it lived through the ordeal, well! but if it failed, it would be a terrible recoil of duplicity against itself. He feared the worst, but he preserved his aspect marvelously well for a man who feared so much.

"I may be willing to submit my testimony to your test, Mr. Emmett," said the Recorder, as he rose from his rapid examination.

A vague but painful suspicion shot through Mr. Emmett's mind as his eye received the confidence which set upon the face of the witness, and he felt a decided uneasiness as he saw Mr. Vaux returning to the stand.

"You have said Mr. Vaux," said Mr. Hoffman, "that you believe the letter which you now hold in your hand, was written by the same hand that wrote the Caldwell forgeries, and that that hand was Monroe Edwards's; do you still retain that opinion?"

"I do sir."

"Upon what ground sir?"

"Because it is a fellow of the same character, as well in appearance as in device," said the Recorder. "It is a forgery. Probably only intended to impose upon his counsel, but now by its unadvised introduction, made to impose upon himself."

The true New Orleans stamps were here shown to be at variance with the counterfeit post mark engraven in the Tombs; and the character of the writing was also proven, by comparison with the letters furnished by Winfree in the forger's undoubted hand.

The defence for the moment were overwhelmed. Indeed, throughout the case whenever they had raised from the heavy plunges which the prosecution had administered to them, it was only to see themselves driving on the rocks. Now they seemed to be entirely stranded.

If they had been profane men, or if they had not been rendered stoical by the vicissitudes of long experience, we would venture an opinion that they must at that moment have cursed their client in their hearts; but as it was, the only outward evidence which they gave of their disorder, was a demand for an adjournment. They wanted time to catch their wind and survey the position of their antagonists with some coolness, before advancing any further.

Though it was late, the adjournment

was opposed by the other side. They had but one or two more witnesses to examine when they would rest their case.

Upon this Mr. Corrie was called and sworn, but after he had got so far as to state he had remitted funds to John P. Caldwell at Alexandria, to the amount of \$25,600, his testimony was objected to by Mr. Price, as not being relevant to the forgery on Brown, Brother's & Co., and ruled out.

The prosecution then consented to the adjournment, remarking as they gathered up their papers that they had but a single question to ask of Mr. Jamieson in the morning, when the other side might open for the defence.

What that defence could possibly be, the wondering spectators could not in the least imagine, and they wondered still more to see the man whom they regarded as completely involved in the toils of a bitter destiny, still bearing himself as calmly as if he were the least interested person in the scene

CHAPTER XXIX.

Opening of Mr. Evarts—Introduction of the Johnson agreement—the Misses Phillips'—testimony of the bar-keepers—the hotel registers—fourth day—concluding testimony.

At the opening of the court on the third day, the prosecution concluded by asking two of the previous witnesses some technical questions. They then left the case with the defense, under the reservation that they might have privilege to introduce some subsequent testimony and letters, if to them it should seem necessary.

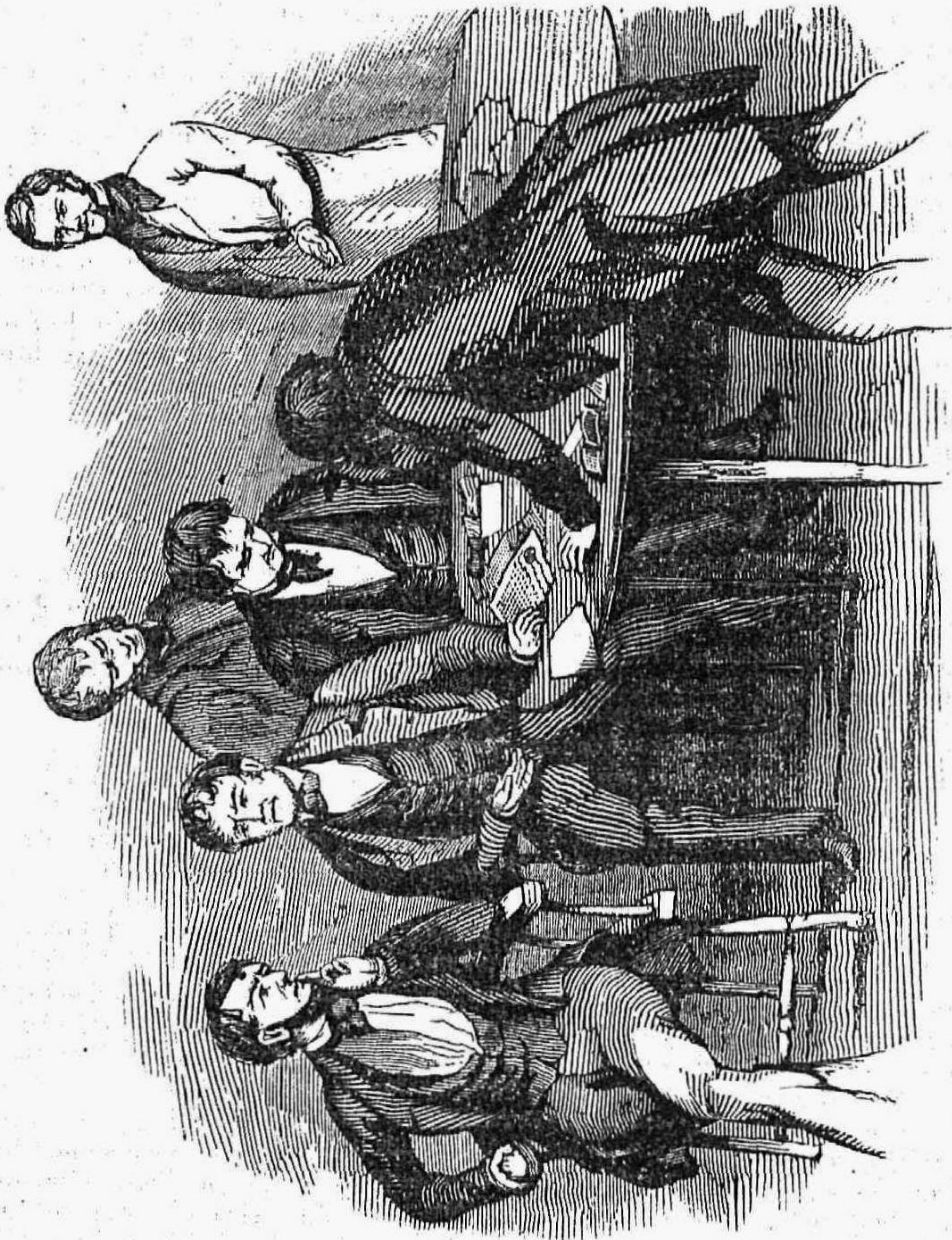
Mr. Evarts, to whom had been awarded the responsible duty of opening for the prisoner, then went inside the rail to commence his task.

He began by alluding to the time which the prosecution had consumed in magnifying all sorts of little circumstances against the prisoner, and conjured the jury not to suffer this perverse accumulation to shut up the passage to their minds from the ingress of the truth. He charged the real object of the complainants to be the possession of some fifty thousand dollars which belonged to the prisoner, and incidentally impugned the prosecution with ungenerous dealing, in framing little plots to catch them by surprise in every progress of the case. Mr. Evarts next gave a brief narrative of the Colonel's movements for the previous two

years, introducing the partnership with Charles F. Johnson, and promising the jury a revelation of his business operations with that gentleman, which would satisfy their minds as to the regularity of his possession of the large amount of money found in his trunk at the time of his arrest. In addition to this, he would also show them, by irrefragable testimony, that the prisoner was not either at Balti-

more or Richmond, at the times named by the nine witnesses who had pretended to identify him. Therefore, said the counsel, he could not have been the Mr. Caldwell who had the pleasure of defeating the sharpness of these gentlemen brokers, who, to judge by their other mistakes, were very easily deceived. "As to the stamps and types," remarked Mr. Evarts, in conclusion, it really does not seem to

SCENE IN THE COURT OF OYER AND TERMINER ON THE TRIAL OF EDWARDS.



RÉCORDER VAUX TESTIFYING TO THE STAMPS AND MONEY FOUND IN THE FORGER'S TRUNKS.

me to be either very strange or very criminal, for a gentleman so well provided in his wardrobe as our client, to have a marking apparatus; though I must confess, it does appear to be a little remarkable, that our enterprising opponents could find no other collocation for the harmless letters which made up his name, than the words "New Orleans, La."

The learned gentleman, after having

spoken two hours, concluded amidst expressions of involuntary applause from all parts of the audience. The Judge immediately repressed this demonstration with the threat, that if it were attempted again, he would commit all parties implicated in it for contempt.

The defense having resolved as their first movement, to account for the prisoner's possession of the large amount of

money found upon him at the time of his arrest, commenced by introducing the testimony of Charles F. Johnson, as taken in Havana. This testimony affirmed, as the reader will bear in mind, that in the month of August preceding, he (Johnson,) had paid to Edwards, who was his partner, the sum of fifty thousand dollars at a hotel in Baltimore, as his share of capital, in an extensive slave-trading operation between Texas and Martinique.

A peculiar smile might have been noticed on the faces of the counsel for the prosecution, as this fraudulent testimony was put in; but a close observer would have detected also in this smile, a latent expression of chagrin, as piece by piece, the plausible revelation seemed to be devoured by the audience and by the jury. They knew that Charles F. Johnson was Ashmore Edwards, but the rules of law precluded them from showing the fact, either by the consul's letter, or by the ship-master's affidavit, and they were thus forced to bite the bridle of their knowledge, and confine themselves strictly within the tether of the commission itself.

Edwards sat surveying them attentively, ascribing their uneasiness rather to the effect of his tactics than to the natural uneasiness which agitates those who hold trenchant weapons in their hands, while their arms are bandaged from their use. He divided his glances between them and the jury, and he began to count upon his triumph with complacent confidence.

The Johnson agreement itself was next introduced and read. It was found to agree in every point with Mr. Johnson's testimony, and with such minds as could not discriminate between identical accumulations and independent facts, it was received as a corroboration of the highest sanction. The schedule annexed to it, describing the character of the money paid to Edwards on its conditions, received a like regard, and seemed to pass to the minds of the jury with the same facility. Mr. Hoffman, while it was being read, leaned forward and made a note of something which seemed to strike his mind.

Proceeding still farther in the flush of their success, the defense next put in two letters, purporting to have been written by the prisoner himself, directed to this same mysterious Mr. Charles F. Johnson, or "Uncle Charles," as the counsel for the defense now jocosely called him. The first of these was a letter, dated "Waverly House, New York, 31st Aug.," (the date of his actual presence in Balti-

more as Caldwell,) and the second was the letter dated "4th April," in the Tombs, directed to Havana, and urging "Uncle Charles" to hasten on, and put the tongue of slander at rest forever. The letter of the date of 31st August, related entirely to pretended business transactions between the writer and the fictitious Johnson, and was most ingeniously contrived to confirm every flustering impression that might be inclined to settle in favor of the validity of the bond. As we have given the Tombs letter in a previous chapter, we will complete our record by also giving this.—

(C.)

"WAVERLY HOUSE, NEW YORK. }
31st August, 1841. }

CHARLES F. JOHNSON, ESQ.

My Valued friend, I fortunately met with Isadore yesterday afternoon, at Philadelphia, and as he was in a great hurry to get on to Bath, I concluded to come over thus far with him, and I embrace the only opportunity I shall have in communicating with you until we meet.

I have closely observed the Tobacco market since we parted, and as yet have come to no definite determination in regard to the point at which I shall make the purchase. I shall hold on at Philadelphia until the 1st of October, and if I get no favorable accounts by that time in regard to the subsision of the fever at New Orleans, I shall then proceed to charter or load a brig from Baltimore, and will sail in all that month for St. Pierre. If however, things should look favorable at New Orleans, I would prefer to go there, as it would afford me an opportunity of paying a short visit to my friends there, which would of course be very gratifying to me; however, rest assured, that I have an eye single to our joint interest, and no consideration of a personal character will induce me to lose sight of that interest for a single moment. From the last quotations at New Orleans compared with the prices quoted by Delerény, I see we shall realize a profit of 20 per cent., and if we are fortunate enough to succeed in consummating the barter pending with Mr. Pœvil, the Tobacco that will cost us \$40,000 here will be worth to us \$80,000 in Martinique.

Since you left I have seen a very good friend of mine from Texas, and have made some preliminary arrangements with him calculated to facilitate the removal of our people from Galveston to Red River, the arrangements I refer to is the procuring of a steam boat to convey the negroes from Galveston to the highest navigable point on the Sabine or Natchez—this plan will be greatly preferable—the rivers will be up in March and April, and the steam boat will save us the long, tedious, and costly land transportation. There is another advantage desirable from this plan, that has probably not occurred to you. The country about Galveston is very sparingly populated, and wagons and teams would cost us very high, if indeed they could be procured at

all; on the other hand, eastern Texas is very well settled, and such conveyances as we want can be procured cheap and abundant. I know the country *well* from Galveston Bay to Red River, and depend upon it, it will be no easy matter to move 800 or 1000 people from the Bay to the region of Nacogdoches; after getting that far there will be no trouble, the country is open and well settled, and the roads good from that position of the country to Red River. If no misfortune prevents I flatter myself I shall be snugly domiciliated at Sassafras Point by the first of May next, and if untiring industry can accomplish any thing, I will in the course of two or three years, show you one of the finest estates in the South.

The *brulias* that I mentioned to you, contain about 3,800 acres, and if I get to the Point by the first of May, I intend to burn it all off and plant the whole in corn, and with a good season, I shall hope to gather at least 120,000 bushels, and in 1843 I fully expect to make at least 3000 bales of cotton, besides carrying on all needful improvements. I hope to put things in such a state that when you visit me you will be disposed to give up your Mexican establishments altogether, and finally settle down on Red River. If any thing should occur to prevent your coming over to Martinique in person, I want you to be very full and explicit in your instructions to Mr. Pœvil, for you know he is a very curious old gent. Your true friend.

M. EDWARDS

(Directed.)

CHARLES F. JOHNSON, Esq.

Sisal, Mexico.

Per, A. ISADORE.

This letter, so smooth, so plausible, so harmonious with the previous parts of the Johnson episode, created a visible impression throughout the court room, and very many who had till this moment maintained a faint resistance against the theory of the defense in relation to the possession of the money, yielded to the belief that Johnson was an actual personage, and the bond a *bona fide* paper. They were fairly conquered by the genius of the juggler, for not having been destined in the dispensations of intellect to conceive the character of such a scheme, they believed the story, from mere want of mental power to comprehend and to unravel it.

The possession of the money by the prisoner now seemed to be explained, and having given him the advantage of being regarded with that meretricious favor which always attaches to a man of wealth, the defense had but to grapple with the alibi. The first movement to this was the introduction of the testimony of the two Misses Phillips of the boarding-house in Philadelphia, as well that of Miss Lucy who kept the books, as of Miss Caroline, who was the prisoner's unfortunate betrothed.

The young ladies had refused to appear

in person at the trial. The ordeal would have been too agitating for Miss Caroline, and therefore they were both excused. They, however, gave their testimony on commission, as in the case with Johnson.

The deposition of *Miss Lucy B. Phillips*, stated that she was twenty years of age; that she resided with her mother who kept a boarding house at 104 South Front street, Philadelphia, and that she kept the books of the establishment. Miss Lucy further deposed, that Edwards came to her mother's house on the 17th July, previous, and remained there till the night of his arrest. He had been absent at intervals—which intervals, on reference to her register, she found to be, from July 31st till August 3d; from August 10th, till the 11th; from August 24th, till after dinner on the 28th; and from August 30th till September 5th. Miss Lucy stated that she was sure that he was in Philadelphia on the 30th of August, as, on that day, when paying his bill, the Colonel also paid her a bet of a pair of gloves which she had won from him some days previous. Among the other boarders in the house, Miss Lucy mentioned that there was a gentleman named Nicholas F. Johnson, who had been there from the 23d of June till the 20th of October, some two weeks after the Colonel's arrest.

Miss Caroline Phillips deposed that she was eighteen years of age; that she had known Monroe Edwards while at her mother's house; that on the 10th August, while she was on a visit to Bordentown, he ran down to see her and returned the next day. She also testified to his having been at home on the 30th August, on the afternoon of which day he left, as he said, for New York, and did not return till the 5th September. The fair deponent further stated, that Mr. Edwards had made proposals of marriage to her on the 19th or 20th of August, and, in connection with such proposals, had offered to settle on her a sum of twenty thousand dollars. That she replied, "perhaps he was jesting," whereupon to convince her of his sincerity, he went to his room and returned with a package of money rolled in an oil cloth, and counted out on her lap \$20,000, in one thousand and five hundred dollar notes. He had a roll of money left, larger than that which he had counted in her hand. That is for you, said he; this for me. This is the largest, said deponent, "No," said he, "though it looks larger it is equal in amount." The remainder of Miss Caroline's deposition was merely corroborative of the points previously deposed to by her sister, except the

additional fact, that she and the prisoner had been corresponding with each other since his arrest.

The prosecution were fast getting work upon their hands. Miss Caroline had wonderfully helped the Johnson bond, and by the corroboration of the forger's means seemed to dispose of all the presumptions of guilt which had been founded on his previously unexplained possession of the money. They were not uneasy, however. They could have proved Miss Caroline to have been slightly mistaken, and Miss Lucy's register, to have been not altogether accurate. They could have proven this by witnesses whom they had in attendance from Frederick and Alexandria, but on weighing the whole matter in their minds previous to the commencement of the trial, they had decided to let the testimony of the young ladies go unchallenged. The departure of Edwards from Philadelphia on the 30th of August was not incompatible with his operations in Baltimore on the 31st August, or in Richmond on the 2d September, and therefore Mr. Hoffman wisely urged his associates to let the ladies proceed unruffled through the record. The District Attorney, with his headlong bitter instincts would have rasped in at every flaw; but Mr. Hoffman showed so forcibly the danger of turning the popular sympathies against their case by such a course, that his policy was acquiesced in by his other associate, and, it consequently carried the day. The witnesses from Frederick and Alexandria were therefore secretly discharged, and the prosecution became the sympathisers and condolers with the young ladies for the wrong which the artful swindler had meditated against their family. It was a great movement in the game to yield, for it bolstered the Johnson story, and legitimatised the possession of the funds, but it was the relinquishment of Mantua in a grander movement for the safety of all Italy. Any other course would have lost them their case, and it was well that they were wise enough to know it.

Having read the testimony of the two young ladies, the counsel for prisoner called *William L. Elder*, of Baltimore, one of the witnesses to the execution of the Johnson bond.

Mr. Elder stated that he was one of the lessees of the Eutaw House, of Baltimore; that the bond which had been shown him bore his signature as a witness; he had signed it at the request of two gentlemen who were at his house during the previous fall, and one of whom was putting up there. He had no distinct recollection of

the gentleman; both were strangers to him, but he recollected that one was taller than the other. He had witnessed two papers, and this bond was one of them.

Mr. Foley, passenger agent from Baltimore to Washington, testified that the name of "*Edwards*" was on the way list of the morning train, going from Washington to Baltimore on the 31st August. In the afternoon of the 4th September, the name was there again. On the 11th September the name of *Caldwell* was found on the way list from Baltimore to Washington, and coming back, the next day, the name of *Edwards* was on.

The prisoner's counsel having called *Nicholas F. Johnson*, twice without avail, summoned

David Graham, barkeeper of the Northern Hotel, Courtlandt st., to the stand. The witness produced the register of the hotel and showed under the date of August 30th the names of "*Belcher and Edwards La.*" on one line. The room attached to the names was No. 9, a double bedded room. The entry was discolored by tobacco juice, which the witness accounted for by saying, that the book might have fallen upon the floor. He did not recollect *Belcher and Edwards* when they arrived, but supposed they were there at the time. On his cross-examination he said that the register was accessible to every body; that the name of *Belcher* had been written in lead pencil originally, and had been written over by himself; but the words "*and Edwards*" were not in his hand writing.

(The fact was, that when *Child* went to the Northern Hotel to insert the name of *Edwards*, he found the page under the date of August 30th, full; he therefore had been obliged to connect it with another name, by extending the line. He had acquainted the prosecution of this fact, but they had obtained possession of it too late to hunt *Mr. Belcher* up.)

Robert A. Carter, the keeper of the Waverly Hotel, produced the register of that establishment. Under the date 31st August there was an entry of "*Mr. Edwards, La.*" Attached to the name was the letter "*D*" for dinner, which indicated that the arrival had been in the day time. On the 31st August, the witness was not attached to the hotel, but he was so, on the 3d September. On the 6th September, *Edwards* arrived at the hotel and witness saw him there. He stayed at that time three days. On his cross-examination *Mr. Carter* stated that he could not say that the entry under date of 31st August had been on the book at the time of his

arrival there; but there was one singular contradiction about the entry; for though the name of Edwards La: was marked "D" for dinner, it was written quite at the bottom of the page, and came after the names of persons who were marked "L" for lodging, which showed that they who were entered before him had arrived in the late train, too late for tea.

The Colonel set his lips bitterly as these blunders of the Englishman were made apparent, but coughing in his handkerchief to hide his confusion, he in a moment wiped all traces of uneasiness away.

Next came a witness whom the defense had obtained with considerable difficulty, and from whom they expected work of considerable consequence; indeed, no less a service than a refutation of the testimony of Tappan, Vaux and Jamieson, in relation to the handwriting of the forged letters. This witness was

Samuel Ellis, who on being sworn testified, that he was a merchant in Boston where he had resided for eight months last past; that previous to that time he had resided in New York for three years; that he became acquainted with Monroe Edwards in 1834 and 1835 in New Orleans. He had seen Edwards write frequently, and had received letters from him ever since 1836. He thought the entry in the register of the Eutaw House under date of 31st July to be in the handwriting of Edwards; he also thought the entry in the Waverly register of 31st August was the same, but he would not be so sure in relation to the entry in the book of the Northern Hotel, as that was a little blurred; and besides it was now candle light and therefore a bad time to decide. The articles of agreement between Johnson and the prisoner were plainly in the prisoner's hand. He had last seen Mr. Edwards on the 7th September when he called on prisoner at Waverly Hotel and walked with him to the Battery. *Mr. Edwards then wore whiskers all around, and under his chin, as he does now.*

On his cross-examination Mr. Ellis stated that he was introduced to a Mr. Johnson by Edwards, but could not describe him, neither could he recollect his christian name. He knew the prisoner had a brother, but had never seen him.

The business of the prisoner had been buying and selling lands and dealing in negroes in Texas. Witness had assisted in purchasing plantations for him, and prisoner had the previous summer intimated to witness a famous plan of taking negroes to Texas from the French West India Islands.

Paul D. Dorsey, assistant keeper of a hotel in Fredericksburg, testified that his register bore the entry of Mr. Edwards, La.; under date of December 3d; and on his cross-examination said that a person leaving Richmond on the morning of the 3d, could not arrive in Fredericksburg till the next day.

Thomas Jenkinson, the bar keeper of the American Hotel, at Albany, N. Y., testified to the entry of "M. Edwards, La.," in his register on the 3d of September, but he did not recollect the prisoner.

James Bagley, of Jones' Hotel, Philadelphia, testified that on the 12th July, while the prisoner was staying at that hotel, under his own name, there was an entry of "H. S. Hill" upon the register. Edwards' own name is entered under date of the 8th July.

At the conclusion of the testimony of this witness the court adjourned for the night, the Judge appointing twelve officers, each to separately accompany the tired jurors to their homes, and to return with them in the morning.

FOURTH DAY.

The prisoner entered this morning as complacent and serene as ever. A few minutes after he had taken his seat the proceedings were resumed.

H. C. McKensie, bar keeper of Jones' Hotel, Philadelphia, testified that there was a person of the name of "H. S. Hill" staying at that house in July of the previous summer. He came on the 12th and left on the 14th. The prisoner was staying there at the same time. Mr. Hill was a different person from the prisoner.

The defense now proceeded to call a number of witnesses to establish the fact that there were several persons about in the community, who bore such astonishing likeness to Colonel Edwards, that he might very naturally become chargeable with their derelictions and their whereabouts. For this purpose they first called

Daniel Marley, a printer, who had been familiarly called the second edition of Monroe Edwards. The prosecution objected to the first question put to the witness as to whether he had ever been taken for Monroe Edwards, on the ground that it was the person who had made the mistake, and not Mr. Marley, who should be called on this point. The Court took the same view and ruled the inquiry out. The object of the defense was accomplished however by the mere appearance of the witness on the stand, and mindful of the fact, one of the prosecution before he let him go, acutely drew from Mr. Marley the fact that he had not been in Balti-

more the previous summer, nor in Albany, except in July.

Edwin L. D. Brooks, Attorney at Law, thought there was a strong resemblance between Monroe Edwards and Alexander Powell, who was lately appointed Consul to Rio Janerio.* Witness knew Powell's hand writing, and on being shown the registers' thought the signatures of Edwards looked very much like the Consul's style of letter. He also stated that there was a very strong likeness between Powell and Edwards.

Daniel D. Howard, of Howard's Hotel, had seen Powell and Edwards frequently together. They were in the habit of dressing very much alike, and on one occasion he could scarcely distinguish them apart.

Captain J. Sherman, another person exceedingly like the Colonel, testified that he had a brother whom he was scarcely able to distinguish from the prisoner. He had not himself been in Baltimore or Richmond in August or September last, and as for his brother, *he* had been further South. The witness further said he had been taken for Monroe Edwards. Once, by a gentleman who had crossed from England with Mr. Edwards, and another time by a person who got angry on supposition that the witness was seeking to deny himself.

Samuel Ellis, who was sworn on the previous night was here re-called. The Frederick register was handed to him and he swore that he believed the entry of M. Edwards La., under the date of 3d September, was in the prisoner's hand. He would not swear *positively* to the Albany register, but thought the words "& Edwards," in the Northern Hotel register, were in the hand-writing of the prisoner. On being shown the letter of Hugh S. Hill, the Caldwell correspondence and the forged letter signed Maunsel, White & Co., he did not think any of them was in the handwriting of the prisoner. The District Attorney, then showed Mr. Ellis parts of letters, which puzzled him not a little, and obliged him to ask leave to compare, and to look inside. The Winfree letter was handed to him,

* After the arrest of Edwards, Powell had gone back to Washington, and through the oblique influences of the quandom and beautiful Mrs. P. had accomplished the above named lucrative and important Consulship. He was deprived of it, however, shortly after, through the threats of Hon. Caleb Cushing, to the U. S. Senator who had secured the appointment, that unless it were revoked, he would expose the whole machinery of its accomplishment.

and he thought a portion which was turned outward looked like the prisoner's writing. On opening it, he said he was confirmed in this opinion by the signature "M. Edwards," at the bottom. He had noticed the peculiarity of the spelling of the word "few" in the Caldwell letter, and also in this, but did not think it was a confirmed peculiarity of Monroe Edwards.

Another letter was here shown to witness, but the defence objected.

Mr. Hoffman, replied that he wanted to show that the letters of Monroe Edwards have a peculiarity in spelling the words "few, sacrifice" and others, and that the same peculiarity runs through the letters of Hugh S. Hill and John P. Caldwell; a conclusive evidence that they had all been written by one and the same hand.

The prisoner twitched in his chair as if he had been stung. This was the first notice which he had received of the biggest danger that lay in his path. It appalled him for a moment and he looked towards his counsel for the first time for a suggestion what to do. The appeal was fruitless; they were as much perplexed as he. He then turned back upon his own resources and declining his head thoughtfully, pondered a means to rebut this frowning danger. We shall see to-morrow what his brain produced.

The letter to Winfree was here read. It showed that the prisoner had been without funds and without prospect of getting any on the 28th July, while the letter to Henry A. Wild, of 24th of Sept. about his having "a pocket full of rocks" after.

Mr. Ellis, who still remained on the stand, was again shown the register of the Waverly House, and though he did not feel disposed to say positively that the entry on the 31st August was in the prisoner's hand, he thought that some of the letters were very much like his. The entry in Jones' register he said was evidently his.

The defence here called Samuel A. Suydam, but that person not appearing, they rested the case with the privilege of introducing him, and two other witnesses whom they expected from Philadelphia, after the prosecution should have got through with the testimony of some witnesses, whom they had till now held in reserve.

These witnesses were Mr. A. J. Elder, the Treasurer of St. Mary's College, Baltimore, a lawyer named Titus, and an engineer named Charles Rowe. Mr. Elder swore to Edwards having been in Baltimore on the 31st August, and to his having

called at the college that morning to see his nephew. Mr. Titus testified that he knew both Powell and Edwards and saw not the least resemblance between the two. Mr. Rover stated that he had known the brothers Edwards in Texas, but had not seen Ashmore in this city.

The prosecution here was done, and Suydam not having arrived for the defence, both parties rested their case and the court took a recess of an hour, previous to Mr. Marshall's commencement of the summing up.

CHAPTER XXX.

The summing up—the duel—the “pony” letter—the verdict.

When the Court resumed their seats, the Hon. Mr. Marshall took his position before the jury to commence summing up the case for the defense. He was to be followed by Mr. Hoffman, of the other side; Senator Crittenden was to bring his heavy batteries to bear upon the New York counsellor, and Whiting, the District Attorney, was allowed to follow through the smoke and dust of the conflict, in the rear.

After Mr. Marshall had said a word or two on the relative positions of the parties in the case, he made allusion to an article which had appeared in *The Courier & Enquirer*, an influential morning journal, reflecting severely upon him for having left his seat in Congress to advocate the cause of the most notorious swindler in the country. Turning full upon Colonel Webb, the offending editor, who had been an attentive observer of the proceedings, Mr. Marshall retaliated in a strain of withering but eloquent recrimination, winding up, with a dashing challenge to the duello, which insensibly elicited from the transported spectators, two distinct rounds of applause. Great confusion was attendant upon this unexpected episode, but the promptness and temper of the judge soon restored decorum and the case went on. The challenge, however, was given, and to spare the trouble of future reference to the matter, it may be as well to state at once, that a duel ensued, in which the Colonel was severely wounded by the Congressman. The former won the first shot, and discharged his pistol in the air; but the latter having come upon the field with an earnest spirit of revenge, levelled his pistol when it came his turn, and shot the editor in the thigh. The ball was intended for a deadlier mission, but the skilful hand which raised the weapon was

nerved too eagerly, and contracted on the trigger before its time. The result of the reconter to the wounded editor was an ugly lameness and brief imprisonment on his return to New York, for the offence of having sent the challenge.

Having relieved himself of his spleen, Mr. Marshall returned to the case. He contended that Monroe Edwards could not have been the forger, as, to be guilty, it would have been necessary for him to have been either at New Orleans when the forged letter to Brown, Brothers & Co. was dropped in the post office in that city, or in the city of New York, when it was laid on their desk. He reminded the jury that the prosecution had failed to prove him in Alexandria on the 25th or 28th of August, while the testimony of the ladies was entirely incompatible with the probability of his presence there when the letter from Brown, Brothers & Co. was received at that place by the real forger, whoever he was. More than this, said Mr. Marshall, the register of the Northern Hotel, shows that he was in New York on the night of the 30th August, that he stopped on the following day at the Waverly; that he was in Albany two or three days afterward, and again in New York on the 6th September. Here are facts, said he, which pulverise all the assumptions of the other side, and scatter their points like dust, never to be gathered up again. As for the witnesses who have pretended to identify him in Baltimore and Richmond, not one of them ever saw him before, except Mr. Elder, the treasurer of St. Mary's college in the former city; and his memory, it appears by his own hesitations, cannot be relied on, even by himself. All these witnesses swear, mark you, however, that the forger's whiskers came only down to the jaw, while we have shown by Mr. Ellis, that on the 6th September, only four days afterward—they grew all around his chin, in the same exuberance which distinguishes them now. Mr. Marshall then touched upon the evidence of the bag marked “J. & Lee” being found in the prisoner's trunk, by referring to that portion of the lad's cross-examination, in which he had admitted he had given out similar bags to other persons, and that some times these bags were not returned. “How reasonable then was the inference that one of these bags should have fallen in the prisoner's hand by a very innocent incident of business.” The advocate next returned to the question of identity, and having recapitulated his former position in relation to the nine witnesses who had sworn to Edwards, dwelt as before upon the

treasurer of the college, and in his eagerness to break down his testimony, intimated that he had been guilty of perjury.—He knew that Edwards had called on him on the morning of the 31st in Baltimore, and enquired for his nephew; saying when he left, that he would be down again next Saturday, when he would be in funds and would pay his nephew's schooling. While Mr. Marshall was expiating upon this, one of the jurors, overcome by the heat and the excitement, suddenly fell ill, and the Court was adjourned till the following morning. The prisoner appeared to be more thoughtful when he retired from the Court than at any previous period of the proceedings. His brain had been revolving the fatal revelation of the morning in relation to his orthography, and it was working at the project of some cure.

FIFTH DAY

About nine o'clock on the morning of this day, Mr. Hoffman, on going into his office previous to crossing to the Court, discovered a note upon his desk directed to himself. On opening it, he found it to be written in a delicate female hand and signed by a lady's name. It commenced by stating that the writer, knowing him to be a liberal and courteous gentleman, would take the liberty of asking him a question in relation to a little difficulty which she had gotten into, and which, according to his answer, would create or not, a necessity for an employment of his professional services. She had a little son about 13 years of age, and she had bought him a little *poney* to ride; after she had had the *poney* for about three weeks, and her son had got very much attached to it, a female neighbor of hers, who had seen the *poney*, had borrowed the *poney* for her son to ride. Not wishing to refuse her neighbor, the writer had lent the *poney*; but now, after the *poney* had been in the borrower's use for several days, she found it impossible to get the *poney* back. She wished to know of Mr. Hoffman, if there were no measures of law by which she could recover the *poney* and obtain such redress for the detention of the *poney* as the circumstances of the case would seem to warrant. The writer added that she did not care so much for the value of the *poney*, as for the manner in which the *poney* had been gotten from her, and wouldn't Mr. Hoffman be so kind as to just leave a line on his desk before going into Court this morning, (which she would send for) letting her know what she must do to get her *poney* back?

The lawyer at first did not know what to make of this strange note with its curiously spelt *poney*, and its continual reite-

rations, but having no time to waste in trifling speculation, he concluded that a lady who could afford to buy a pony for her son to ride, was quite able to pay for instruction how to get it back, and therefore quietly laid the letter aside without further concern, and proceeded to the Court.

Previous to the commencement of proceedings, Mr. Hoffman, while engaged in conversation with his associates, carelessly remarked—by the way, Whiting, I received a very singular note this morning.

"About what?" said Whiting, quickly.

"About a *p-o-n-e-y*, pony," said Mr. Hoffman, spelling the word humorously, previous to pronouncing it.

"Hush," said Whiting, smiling, "I have received one, too!"

"And so have I," said Judge Kent, near whom the two lawyers had been standing, and at the same time pulling his note from his pocket.

Whiting did the same and the two letters were then compared, and proved to correspond almost exactly with each other, and also with the description which Mr. Hoffman gave of the one he had left at his office.

There was then a pause for a moment which Mr. Hoffman broke by saying; "Ah, I see the fellow's object now. These continual repetitions of the word *poney*, were to fix that arbitrary mode of spelling temporarily upon our minds, so that in writing over replies, we should insensibly fall into the same combination. His intention was then to use our letters to defend the imputations on his own orthography from of connection with that of Caldwell, for you will perceive, if he could have shown that three gentlemen known for their scholarship and intelligence, had fallen into an error in the misspelling of a word so common as the word "*pony*," there would be but little force in the coincidence of the word *fiew* between two other persons."

"I see, I see!" said Whiting, and the three gentlemen turned their eyes simultaneously towards the forger.

He had been looking at them, but he did not turn his eyes away. His gaze was steady, unconcerned, and tranquil, but Mr. Hoffman thought he could discern in the corners of his mouth a slight trace of humor, at the extent in which he had succeeded in puzzling their minds.

"He is indeed an extraordinary man!" said the Judge in a half-musing tone, as he turned to take his seat. It was now ten o'clock, and the Judge rapped on his desk to announce that the court was opened.

Mr. Marshall, resumed the argument which had been broken by the illness of the juror on the day before. He confined his remarks principally to the Johnson bond and the just possession of the money found in his client's trunk previous to the consummation of the forgery; concluding with an apology to the court and jury for having been guilty of a breach of decorum at the outset of his address, by alluding to a matter not in the record, and personal only to himself.

He concluded at half past twelve, and when he sat down there were several distinct rounds of applause from the audience, which neither the court nor the officers could repress.

The complacent temper with which Mr. Marshall alluded to his strong excitement of the previous day, was ascribed on all sides to the soothing influence of a challenge which it was supposed he had received on the night before, from Colonel Webb, who now sat behind him, still an observer of the proceedings.

Mr. Hoffman on rising stated that he should adhere strictly to the evidence in the case in the course of his remarks, and desired the jury to understand at the outset, that the question whether the prisoner forged the letters signed Marshall, White & Co., was not the material one in their inquiry; it was, that he had uttered that letter, knowing it to be forged, and if they were satisfied of his participation in the fraud to that extent, they must find him guilty of the charge.

"Let us see what we have proved then said the counsel."

First, we have shown a man at Philadelphia, who is without means on the 9th July, and this man must raise means, and he writes to Maunsell, White & Co. They believe the tale which he tells, write a letter in answer that their correspondents in New York are Brown, Brothers & Co. Whoever the H. S. Hill was who wrote the letter, it is plain that letter was written by some person to obtain the signature, which they might forge, and pass to Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co. Here H. S. Hill disappears, and on these facts the letter signed Jno. P. Caldwell is written. I ask you from the evidence these letters show, whether if Monroe Edwards had never been arrested, you would not have considered them both to have been written by one person. I am sure you would; where was H. S. Hill when the letter of the 9th was written—it was written at Jones' Hotel, and at Philadelphia, and it is admitted that Monroe Edwards was there and at that Hotel at that time. H. S. Hill did not make his appearance till the 12th, three days after. How does it come, that in H. S. Hill's letter, J. P. Caldwell's, and Monroe Edwards' letters, should all have the word re-

spelt FIEW. After dwelling at some length and with much force upon the strength of this peculiar correspondence in orthography, Mr. Hoffman passed to the defense of the witnesses who had identified the prisoner as the same man who represented Caldwell at Baltimore and Richmond, laying the greatest stress upon the testimony of Mr. Jameison who had picked him out in the Tombs; on that of the boy Hanson, who conversed with him while tying up the bag of gold; of Mr. Maury, who talked with him an hour while waiting for his partner, and on that of Clendenning, the hotel keeper, whose very first customer on his opening a new set of books had been John P. Caldwell. Passing from this, the learned counsel took up the question of the times of his goings and comings between the different points of his field of operations, and denounced the alibi as contradictory, and as feeble in the extreme. "I will prove by the younger Miss Phillips, his own witness," said he, "that Edwards was in Baltimore on the 31st August. I believe that she has spoken the truth; that she is correct in every thing; she does not speak from memory, and I rejoice that this arrest has been made, as saving her from a life of degradation and sorrow. I would tell those, therefore, who would have us believe the prisoner was in the city of New York, on the 30th and 31st August, that for this point I care not for the testimony of the nine witnesses who testify to identity, but I take the testimony of the quaker girl, 'the apostle of truth,' as the counsel who preceded me has called her. She shows that he was absent from her mother's house in Philadelphia, from 30th of August till the 5th September; leaving him time to receive the money. He told Miss Caroline, at the time of his leaving, that he was going south for his nephew, but he would now have us believe that he told her a lie on that occasion, and that he came straight to New York, and put up that night at the Northern Hotel. But gentlemen he did go south for his nephew, and when on the morning of the 31st he was told by Mr. Elder that the lad was at the farm, and would not be back for two or three days, he told him that he would call again on Saturday, when he would be in funds, pay his nephew's schooling and take him away for a few days. He did return on Saturday, paid the bill, and on the 5th September took his nephew with him to Philadelphia. This is the kind of evidence, the evidence of Miss Phillips, their own witness, and of Mr. Elder, an old clergyman, which they would have us set aside for these fraudulent registers." Mr. Hoffman here entered into a scathing analysis of the entries in the registers, and showed from the condition of the books themselves, that the names had been subsequently crowded on the pages after the room which they ordinarily would have occupied, had been filled up with other memorandums in the the previous regular course of business. "But, gentlemen, the testimony of Mr. Phillips and of Mr. Elder is better than the fraudulent inscriptions of these lying registers, and the evidence of the old gentleman, that the prisoner was some 200 miles away from their location, is rather

more reliable than the prisoner's own ingenious letter dated Waverly Hotel, 31st August, all about the *brulias* and *Sassafras* point. Mr. Elder says, that when Edwards left him on the morning of the 41st August, in Baltimore, he said he had no money then, but he would come back on Saturday and pay his nephew's bill.—What gentlemen! no money to pay Dan's bills on the 31st August, when he had had \$50,000 in in his trunks ever since the 2d, paid him in the Eutaw House by his friend and patron, Charles F. Johnson! Observe this gentlemen, and beware of the false sympathy which the ingenious counsel on the other side would beget in your minds as to his poverty and friendless condition.

He is not a poor man, gentleman; he is a rich man! Where are the 50,000 acres of land in Texas, estimated by leagues? Where are the \$40,000 which will be restored to him if he is acquitted of this crime? Will it not be restored to him? Is not it a greater incentive to the exertions of his counsel that this money should depend upon the result of their exertions?

At this point, gentlemen, I would ask you if it is not rather singular coincidence that the money paid him by Charles F. Johnson, should have been precisely the same in character as that sent to the forger by Corrie, and obtained by him from the brokers on the papers of Brown, Brothers & Co., to say nothing of the bag marked "J & LEE," which appeared to have had a similar destiny in both cases. The Baltimore Bank paid Caldwell in Baltimore money; the Virginia Banks paid him in Richmond money, and Lee & Johnson paid him in gold; exactly the same kind of money which, according to the uncertified schedule, 'Uncle Charles' paid to Edwards. Of course, Johnson paid him, and of course, the contract made between them was a sound one but, gentlemen, it is not less singular in its other features than in this strange coincidence in relation to the funds. They made a contract for one hundred thousand dollars. Fifty thousand of it was calculated loosely in negroes, in a lump, at \$200 a piece, (although some might be worth \$300, some \$180, but no matter about that,) but the other \$50,000, which laid in those broad lands estimated by leagues, Mr. Edwards was so particular about, that when the bills and gold were paid, and the discount calculated, the money was found to be a few shillings short, so nice was he about this matter, that he actually made his friend Johnson, his liberal 'Uncle Charles,' whom he had always regarded as his father, pay the odd \$1,50 discount in silver.*

[Here the eyes of the advocate and the prisoner met, and Edwards, despite of all his self-command, could not restrain a broad smile from spreading all over his face at the ingenious and amusing construction which the counsel gave to this portion of the bond.]

Mr. Hoffman then went on to show the contradiction between the letters of Edwards to Charles F. Johnson, and the

affidavit taking out the commission. "On the 4th of April, Edwards wrote and told Johnson that he had already taken out a commission to examine him in Havana. And yet the commission was not taken out till the 6th of April. On the 17th of February he writes and tells Johnson he is sorry to hear of his sickness, yet in his affidavit taking out the commission, he swears that on the 6th of April he had just heard of Johnson's sickness. The commissioners at St. Thomas and St. Pierre, swear they don't believe that there ever was a Charles F. Johnson in those islands; yet the contract says that Johnson has very many negroes in St. Pierre. After the commission was returned from Havana, a man calling himself Charles F. Johnson, makes his appearance panting before the commissioners on the 6th of May, states that he is just from Charleston—that he left that place a month before; which would make it about the 6th of April. He, Johnson, then was in Charleston that day—he went thence to Havana, armed with the contract, armed with the receipt for the money—armed with the answers he has given—armed with these letters—to testify just as he has testified. And yet on the same 6th April, Monroe Edwards swears in his affidavit that Johnson was then sick at Havana. In his letter to Johnson he hopes J. will give up his business and settle down in Texas. And yet on May 6th, Johnson swears that he had been out of all business since the previous January. After referring back to some portions of the earlier testimony, Mr. Hoffman resumed the direct line of his discourse. "We have been told much about the prisoner's desolate condition, and the hardship of his being tried here, away from his friends. I do not believe he has suffered much by being tried away from those who know him, and I admire the judgment of his counsel, who have not opened the door to his character. Only see how he behaves. Miss Phillip's swears he offered and shewed her \$20,000; when we all know gentlemen that it was not his own money, and the very offer to settle it upon her was a violation of the confidence which Chas. F. Johnson, reposed in him. It has been said, gentlemen, that Brown Brothers & Co. is an English house; but, if it were so, is it come to this, that the Englishman who comes among us to enrich us by his talent and enterprise, is to be shut out from obtaining justice? If so, not so have I read the character of my country, and while it is the boast of England that the peer and the peasant—the Englishman and the foreigner—are all alike

*See Schedule B. page 119.

amenable to the laws of that land—that if an American goes to that land and appeals to their laws, he is sure to obtain pure justice—whilst this is so there, let it never be said that here, the man, be he who he may, English or native, cannot obtain justice at the hands of an intelligent and honest jury of my countrymen. Mr. Hoffman concluded by laying great stress on the prevalence of forgery in the community, and the general havoc and distress that forgers make in society. I submit the case to you. If I have argued it warmly, it is because I feel so. Do your duty to the community, as I have feebly endeavored to do mine.”

Mr. Hoffman was followed by Mr. Crittenden, in a keen, cold, and shining argument, which embraced every trifle in favor of the prisoner, and magnified their aggregate into such apparent contradiction with the facts, that while the spell of his eloquence lasted, the theory of the prosecution appeared to have been entirely driven from the mind. He concluded, after having spoken about an hour and a half amid the same spontaneous applause, which had shown itself at the conclusion of all the addresses in favor of the prisoner.

The great men of the case having now concluded, the audience began to show less interest in the immediate proceedings than before, and when Mr. Whiting rose they were fast going out. He, however, determined to continue on, and accordingly went to work, and for some four hours sweated vigorously in the trail of his associate, Mr. Hoffman. Being then remonstrated with by some of the jurors, two of whom said plumply, that they had not understood a word he had said for the previous two hours, the Court yielded to their complaints of fatigue, and adjourned over till Monday morning.

SIXTH DAY.

After the opening of the Court this day, Mr. Whiting resumed his speech, and having continued it for four hours more, he concluded, to the evident gratification of all in the room, at 3 o'clock. A recess then took place, and at 4 o'clock, Judge Kent commenced the delivery of his charge. It was clear, able, and impartial, and notwithstanding it was free from unnecessary verbiage or rhodomontade, it required two full hours for its delivery. At the conclusion of the charge, the audience broke into applause as before, though this time it was given, perhaps, partly, as a compensation to his Honor for the violations of his rules of court decorum, which they had been guilty of before. Had they in the last resort, after they had proved them-

selves masters of the field by applauding three of the counsel with impunity, have neglected the same boldness in compliment to the judge, it might have been taken as a very grievous slight. The jury retired at 10 minutes past 6 o'clock, leaving the Colonel behind, chatting and smiling as unconcerned among his counsel, as if the most remote idea of their agreement against him, had never entered his mind.

After two or three hours had elapsed, and no prospect was given of an early agreement by the jury, the Court adjourned. Edwards was remanded to prison, and the jury were locked up for the night.

On the following morning, Mr. Price and another of the counsel entered the prisoner's cell, and after some preliminary conversation, the former gentleman insinuated to Edwards the policy of compromising with the Browns and Corrie, in case the jury disagreed. The Colonel paused in his toilet at this unexpected advice, and turning full upon the lawyers while his arms were still akimbo with the act of tying his cravat, he exclaimed with almost positive decidedness—"Never, Mr. Price! Never, by God, sir! I'll never compromise with the damned rascals while they have one dollar of my money in their possession!"

"Very well, sir, very well," said the counsellor with a smile, "You make your own election; I need not tell you you must abide the consequences. I only desire you not to deceive yourself!"

Edwards paused thoughtfully for a moment, but the arrival of two visitors at the door, ended the conversation and gave a signal for the lawyers to go.

At a quarter past 10 o'clock, Judge Kent having taken his seat in Court, ordered the Jury to be sent for. On their arrival, the clerk read over their names, and all answering, he slowly asked if they had agreed upon their verdict?

There was a deathlike pause for a moment, which the foreman broke by a reply that they had agreed.

"How say you, do you find the prisoner *guilty or not guilty?*"

"GUILTY, sir!" said the foreman, after another pause.

The prisoner fixed his eyes, glassy and stonelike, upon the speaker, as if he expected him to change the unlooked for words; his color fled from his cheek; he wrenched the side rungs of his chair with his delicate hands, but he uttered not a word.

There was still one faint vision of a hope, and the jury were polled to catch it.

but it was without avail: the fatal GUILTY fell from the lips of all

CHAPTER XXXI.

A Mental Reconnoissance—Letters to Holcroft—Attempt at Escape—The Sentence—The Disappointment.

For some days after the conclusion of the trial, the forger did not possess the spirits which had previously sustained him, but still there was enough of power in his pride, to maintain an outward show of unconcern for every other eye. He felt his condition keenly, nevertheless, for he might take the measure of his fortunes day by day in the decreased respect of those who had been so abundant in their courtesy before.

He was to be tried, moreover, on another indictment. Crittenden and Marshal had returned to their homes in the far west, while the remaining counsel stood in glum revolt at the decreasing prospect of the vast estates in Texas, which had been pledged to them as surety for their fees.

His more intimate associates were in no better tone. Child had departed for ever; not a line of solace, since the trial, had come from Philadelphia; the secret female banker, whose purse had stretched so kindly at the outset of his confinement, had stopped her subsidies; Winfree dared not approach him on account of his glaring treachery in furnishing the "fiew" letter to the prosecution; and even Mary Moore, poor hacknied Mary Moore, paid her decreasing visits more as a patroness than a parasite. Worse than all, poor Kitty, who had never deserted him before, now stood in a posture of defection, for she had been snapped up by a band of saints, who made it their pious duty to defame her wretched master, and to threaten her with damnation and hell fire, if she sent him a single word of encouragement or sympathy.

Altogether, therefore, the condition of the once gay, prosperous, elegant and accomplished Colonel Monroe Edwards, was rather a deplorable one. The game had closed against him, and the only movement now, was to throw up his hand and seek a new fortune in another field. If Holcroft could yet be found, the open sea would furnish scope and verge enough for new advantage, or the colony upon the Doce might still prove the El Dorado of a brilliant future. With these thoughts he resolved upon attempting to escape.

There was no person whom he could en-

gage to do this business except Winfree, so after pardoning him on pretence of believing him innocent of any intended wrong, he charged him to corrupt the victualler's lad who brought the meals, to convey to his cell the implements required for breaking out. The Sweater undertook the commission with alacrity, and with equal alacrity received the Colonel's last remaining valuable—his gold watch—to raise the means to purchase the necessary tools. Winfree found it no difficult task to convert the boy to his proposals, but it so happened that the lad told the secret to his elder brother who employed him, and the elder brother being an informer, and having a natural turn for rascality and treachery, determined to encourage the operation until the time should arrive when he might profitably betray it.

In the mean time, Winfree disposed of the watch, and having appropriated to himself the large portion of its proceeds due to his distinguished solicitude for its owner, he laid the remainder out in the purchase of an iron crow, a watch-spring, a small package of soporific drugs, a ball of cord, and a small toilet box full of fine glazed gunpowder, all of which he regularly deposited with the boy on a given day, directing him to carry them in when he took the prisoner's dinner. The elder brother, however, had kept pace with every movement, and the result was, that when the boy arrived at the prison and asked for admittance through the gate, his basket was seized, and its contents discovered by the head keeper. The cell of the Colonel was then visited and searched, and the whole of his fine project of bursting his dungeon and flying to the fairy region of the central zone, ended only in plunging him into a deeper gloom, and binding him with manacles like the meanest felon.

Still he did not quite give up. A few days of submission, accompanied by plausible hints of future reward, won upon the keepers, and the gyves were stricken off. It was at this period that he wrote again, for the twentieth time, to several of the West Indian Isles for Holcroft. At length, on the 17th October, having staved off his trial until then, in the hope of hearing from the slayer, the Corrie forgery was called on in the Oyer and Terminer, and he was summoned to answer to the charge. Messrs. Evarts, Emmett, and Price, associated with John W., now Judge Edmonds, appeared for the defence, while Allen, of Philadelphia, assisted the New York District Attorney on the side of the prosecution. The public, on this occasion, seemed to take but little interest in the case, which, after five days of tedious progress, wound up with a

return of "guilty" in ten minutes after the retirement of the jury. Such were the accelerating influences of the first award.

What had been threatening before, had now become absolute;—from the region of shadows through which the victim of crime had previously stumbled, grasping after some faint ray of hope, he had now been suddenly precipitated into the very blackness of darkness. There was no choice left in life worthy of a further effort. Two terrible abysses seemed to yawn before him;—one stretching its vast depths downward and downward into an eternity of gloom, and the other rolling its dun billows within the portals of a prison, and vexing its victims with a blistering earthly shame, only to swallow them into the same dark bourne at last. The bold heart was sure to make the shortest jump.

On Sunday night, when the church bells rung their dying cadence through the sonorous vaults of the huge babel of human sin and human suffering in which our prisoner was confined, the moody forger declined his head upon his hand, and reflected long and sadly upon the great change on which he had just resolved. An hour elapsed, during which he scarcely moved, but at the end of that time, perplexed still more than at first with the stupendous problem, he cast himself wearily upon his bunk and sought for sleep. He did not pray, for he was reckless of his fate, and if he had not been entirely so, he had no need to carry hypocrisy into solitude, by any empty forms, for the mere sake of practise.

In the morning, at day break, he rose with his desperate resolution unimpaired. He turned up his bunk, some eight feet long, and stood it on end, that it might serve for a temporary gallows, while from a trunk which had been allowed him in his cell, he cut straps and spliced a running noose with a hangman's not to break his fall beneath the ear. These preparations consumed the time till nearly seven o'clock, when fearing interruption momentarily, he turned the bunk down to its place, and resolved to undergo his sentence, to be passed that morning, before bidding the world a last and long good night. Instead, therefore, of putting on the halter, he dressed his neck in a fashionable cravat, and devoted himself to such other arrangement of his person as would be expected of a man who had previously shown himself so omnipotent in the affairs of the toilet.

At ten o'clock, on the morning of the 24th October, the Court of Oyer and Terminer was densely crowded with a rather fashionable audience, many of whom were beautiful and elegantly dressed ladies, who

had assembled to hear the final proceedings in the case of the great forger; and the Colonel, on the other side, as if fully conscious of the depth of their interest, and the value of the last impression, seemed to have succeeded in surpassing his usual tasteful appearance on the occasions when he had adorned that arena before. He maintained, moreover, his usual demeanor, and in the intervals of smiling conversation with his counsel, he nodded to such faces as he recognised from time to time among the crowd with the cheerfulness of the most serene observer. At length, however, while thus engaged, the summons pierced his ears—

"Monroe Edwards, what have you now to say, why sentence should not be pronounced against you?"

At the word, the Colonel turned almost with military precision, and faced the court. Before he could reply, however, Mr. Evarts, his counsel, intercepted his intention, and according to an understanding had with Edwards some days before, asked the court for a few days' delay, which would enable his client to arrange certain complicated business matters in favor of the family who were now to be deprived of their sole surviving male protector. The Court paused a moment, whereupon, Edwards joined in the request, adding, to give it force, that for years he had been engaged in transactions which no one knew of but himself, and which he desired to close up. The Court, however, after consultation, refused to accede to the request.

The Colonel then advanced still nearer to the bench, and throwing open his coat and taking a graceful position, he commenced to address the Court, in relation to his condition, and what he called his persecutions. He insisted on his innocence, proclaimed with much vehemence that he was a victim of conspiracy, and charged the object of his oppression to be the money of which he had been deliberately and flagrantly robbed by the police at the time of his arrest. In the end, he wished the Court to distinctly understand, that he was indifferent to their favors, and did not ask for mercy, though he confessed they might show their magnanimity by sparing him the additional pang of giving him advice, or reflecting on his character, while passing sentence. What the sentence was, he said, he did not care.

Judge Kent, who had at first seemed utterly confounded at the prisoner's extraordinary audacity, immediately replied, that he had provoked by his language what no request would have been necessary to evade. He then reprimanded him at length, telling him that none who had listened to his trial

doubted of his guilt; and bidding him to charge his ignominious fate alone to the inevitable consequences of the life of crime which he had chosen to pursue.

"Very complimentary, indeed, sir!" said Edwards, bowing, at this point.

"Your remarks, sir, make no difference in the allotted sentence," said the Judge, almost sorrowfully. "You are consigned to ten years' imprisonment in the State Prison at Sing Sing—being five years on each conviction. In this the Court goes to the extreme of the law. Had the law admitted of a larger term, the Court would have imposed it on you—for, under the circumstances of the case, there can be no mitigation."

"I do not ask it, sir!" said Edwards, turning briskly on his heel. The officers were then directed to remove the prisoner; upon which the Colonel of his own accord arose very composedly from his seat, and proceeded to button up his great coat, talking meanwhile to his counsel, with the air of a man about proceeding on a very pleasant journey.

The audience buzzed with wonder as he passed through them, and with some reason stared at him as an enigma or a phenomenon. When he arrived back at the prison, he found his dearest hopes were flown. His preparations for suicide had been discovered, and his cell cleared out; and the head keeper, in apprehension of his dying on his hands, had persuaded the deputy sheriff to convey the desperate man to his ultimate destination that very afternoon.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Attempt to Escape—Man Overboard—The Discovery of the Packing-Box—The Last Forgery—Conclusion.

Plunged in the gloomy oblivion of the State Prison, and consigned to that moral death from which there is no perfect resurrection in this world, it would seem hardly necessary that we should follow the miserable man to gloat upon his degradation until it mingled with the earth; but as his genius relieved even the dark epilogue of his career, we cannot pass it by without injustice to the general picture of his character.

Having been shaved of his whiskers, despoiled of his glossy hair, and attired in the coarse serge of the prison uniform, the forger was put under the tuition of an old convict to learn him the carpet-weaving business. He remained at this vocation, however, but a year, when he was transferred

to the shoe-shop. While in this department, he succeeded in interesting one of the sub-contractors named Campbell, in his case, and persuaded him that he still owned large tracts of valuable Texas lands, on which he could realize immense sums of money if his liberty could only be procured. Insensibly corrupted by these temptations, the agent told Edwards that he would assist him to escape. The forger, upon this, from vague suggestions, took the arrangement of the matter directly in his hands, and ordered the agent to procure a box, such as was used to convey manufactured goods from prison, and to place within it sufficient biscuit and water to answer the demands of hunger for several days. The box was to have a cover which would button inside, so as to prevent the danger of a casual discovery. Edwards was then to write a note as follows:

"When this note is found, Monroe Edwards will be
'no more.'"

This note was to be entrusted to a friendly convict who was to take it, with the cap of Edwards, to the wharf of the prison on the river; and as soon as he caught a signal from the agent that the forger was concealed in the box, he was to deposit the cap and note upon the string-piece, and make outcry that a man had fallen overboard.

All this being arranged, Edwards arose from his shoe-maker's bench on the appointed day, and giving the signal of the uplifted finger, as if desirous of going to the yard, he passed out of the shop, sprang into the box, and closed it. In the next moment the signal was given by the agent, and the confederate convict came bawling from the river with the alarm. The keepers, summoning the convicts who were disengaged, rushed to the wharf to rescue the supposed suicide. The cap and the note confirmed the first idea that the wretched man had plunged into the river—and rakes were immediately procured to recover the lost body.

These efforts continued throughout the day; but, one or two of the old keepers, more conversant with the tricks of convicts than the rest, shook their heads with profound professional mistrust, and commenced a search throughout the prison for the absentee. These latter efforts were resumed the next day with increased activity—and, after every nook and cranny of the buildings had been thoroughly examined, suspicion fell upon the box which had been passed so many times. The lid was burst off—and there, sure enough, lay the missing body of the forger—not dead, according to the terms of his touching valedictory, but breathing hard with apprehension, and haggard with the excessive agitations he had



Scene in the Shoe-Shop of the State Prison.

DWARDS MAKING THE SIGN FOR LEAVE TO GO OUT.

undergone. We will not describe the terrible, the revolting ordeal through which the brutal rage of his detectors obliged him to pass: suffice it, from that day the last remnant of his manhood was purged from his human combination, and not a spark of pride left him to be the encouraging basis of reform, if he should have received his liberty, so longed-for, on the instant. He sank from that very hour, and wilted day by day, so that the observing keepers could mark, by the notches which fate kept stamping upon his face, and the silver which it prematurely sprinkled on his crown, his rapid progress to the grave. Like all who with vitiated passions are forced into ascetic seclusion from the world, he had become a victim to the bright illusions of the past, and daily sowed consumption in his bones by that fatal retaliation of the corrupted sense, which haunts the solitary convict, and which has not been inaptly called the demon of the cells. Despite, however, of these brutalizing and enfeebling influences to the mind as well as body, the glorious sphere of thought in Edwards still maintained its texture—and in the fall of 1846, rallied its powers for a final effort, which, when the difficulties of his condition are fully taken into view, must rank with the most profound and brilliant enterprises of his life.

He had no agent now to aid him, or scarcely an instrument among his fellow-convicts whom he could trust: still he conceived the extraordinary idea of accomplishing a pardon from the Governor, by means of a series of forged letters purporting to come from great leading men in the country, as complicated in its character, as the Caldwell fraud. The whole work was to be accomplished within the narrow circle of his cell, and his sole assistant was to be one of the convict-runners or message-bearers of the prison. He commenced by writing three letters with fictitious signatures; the first of these, which was to be used as the envelope of the other two, was directed to Charles H. Barnes, a sub-contractor in the file department of the prison; the next was to the Hon. Daniel Webster; and inside of the letter to Webster, was a third, which was to James K. Polk, the President of the United States. The letter to Barnes was dated at Cincinnati, Ohio, and it stated that the writer, a hardware merchant of that city, was desirous of ascertaining the prices of the prison manufactures in his line. Asking therefore for a list of the lowest wholesale marks, it concluded with the request that Mr. B. would drop the letter to Mr. Webster, in the post-office, explaining, that a friend had brought the first letter to

Sing Sing, and that he thought it safer to just enclose the other to the senator, and thus subject it to the hazards of as short a mail as possible.

The letter to Daniel Webster (which was written only to secure his signature,) contained an application for his legal opinion relative to a disputed title to certain lands in Texas, and contained the promise of a fee of \$250 on receiving the reply. It concluded by requesting the distinguished senator to drop the enclosed letter to the President, into the Congressional Post-Office in the capitol.

The letter to the President purported to come from an intimate acquaintance of Monroe Edwards, who had powerful reasons for believing that that gentleman was entirely innocent of the charges for which he was then suffering; and it desired respectfully to know from the President, if the fact of that person's innocence should be made manifest, whether he would not address a letter, over his own signature, to the Governor of the State of New York, requesting him to grant the unfortunate and injured man a pardon.

These three letters having been completed, and enclosed one within the other, as above described, the packet was addressed to Mr. Barnes and confided to the runner, with the direction to leave it on the contractor's desk during his absence from his shop. If he were asked afterward where he had obtained it, he was to state that a gentleman who seemed to be in a hurry, with some other gentleman, had handed it to him near the outer guard-house.

It happened that Mr. Barnes was just entering the shop as the runner laid the letter on his desk—and the man started and turned round with some confusion as he heard the contractor's voice over his shoulder, asking, in a careless tone, "what he had there for him?" The man would have retired, but, bidding him wait, Mr. Barnes broke open the letter, and after running it two or three times up and down, and looking as often at the imposing enclosure, he began to question him. Not liking the manner of the fellow's story, the contractor sent for two other officers, and in their presence opened the other letters, and discovered the intended fraud.

The terrified runner had slipped away to the shoe shop during the occupation of the agents, and informed the forger, by a sign, of his misfortune. The poor wretch gazed for a moment at the emissary who brought him the crushing news; then the hammer which was poised in the act of discharging a blow upon his work, dropped from his nerveless hand, and he pitched senseless on

the floor. When the keepers came to seek him out for punishment, they found him in the hospital, insensible to admonition or to pain.

He never rallied from that hour. His heart had broken with the failure of his last great effort, and his mind, following in the general wreck of nature, became subject to delirium. While in this deplorable state, he would at times rave at the injustice that had been done him, and anon would completely change his tone, and in the most touching accents seek to coax to his bedside those whom he once had loved. Towards the end, his delirium took a ferocious turn, and he became seized with the idea

that he was already dead. The physicians and the nurses sought to dissuade him from this horrible monomania, but cursing them vehemently for their incredulity, the furious shadow gnawed at its arms and fingers, to convince them it was no longer amenable to the sufferings of earth.

In the final hour, he sunk into hopeless insensibility, and in this state, the intellect which might have elevated its possessor, and irradiated the world with its brilliancy and power, finished its degenerate career, and passed among the shadows of the future.

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